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THE SAINTS Everlasting REST: OR, A TREATISE OF THE Bleſſed State of the SAINTS In their Enjoyment of GOD in HEAVEN.

Written by the Reverend, Learned and Holy
MR. *RICHARD BAXTER.*

ABRIDGED
By *BENJAMIN FAWCETT.*

The SECOND EDITION.

I think it of great Service to the Souls of Men, to call them to the Notice and Uſe of ſuch a Treatiſe as this; and to bring ſuch old and excellent Writings out of Oblivion and the Duſt.

Baxter's Preface to *Scudder's* Chriſtian's Daily Walk.

SALOP:
Printed by J. COTTON, and J. EDDOWES;
And ſold by J. BUCKLAND, at the *Buck*, in *Pater-noſter-Row*; T. FIELD, at the *Wheat-Sheaf*, the Corner of *Pater-noſter-Row, Cheapſide*; and E. DILLY, at the *Roſe and Crown*, in the *Poultry, London.*
MDCCLXI.


BRITISH MUSEUM
15
66
MAY

TO THE

INHABITANTS

OF THE

BOROUGH AND FOREIGN

OF

KIDDERMINSTER,

Both MAGISTRATES and PEOPLE.

My dear Friends,

THERE are obvious Reasons for prefixing your Names to this Book: It contains the Substance of what was

firſt preached in your Pariſh-Church, and was firſt publiſhed from the Preſs with a Dedication to your worthy Anceſtors. Your Trade and Manufactures can never render your Town ſo famous, as the Name and Writings of Mr. *Baxter* have already made it, both in this Iſland, and in many remote Parts of the Proteſtant World. His intimate and important Relation to *Kidderminſter*, and the Years he abode in it, afforded him the moſt delightful Reflection as long as he lived.

LONG Experience has enabled me to teſtify for you, that, notwithſtanding your Share in thoſe common Diſtinctions which ſo unhappily divide Fellow-Proteſtants,

tants, you poſſeſs a moſt unuſual Degree of Candor and Friendſhip for each other. Thus you ſhew, that *Kidderminſter* has not totally loſt the amiable Spirit which it imbibed more than a Century ago.

THERE are no Excellencies perſonal or relative, no Species of domeſtick or publick Happineſs, no Beauties of civil or religious Life, but what will be naturally promoted by a Care to ſecure to ourſelves an Intereſt in the *Reſt which remaineth to the People of God.* They are the People for whom alone that Reſt is deſigned, both by the Promiſes of God, and by the Purchaſe of the Son of God. A Care to

ſecure that Reſt to ourſelves, is *the one Thing needful.* But neither this People, nor this Care, you well know, are the Peculiarities of any Age, or of any Party. If the Inhabitants of *Kidderminſter* formerly excelled in this Care, you muſt allow, that it was their greateſt Glory. And *this*, more than any Improvements of Trade, or increaſing Elegancies of Life, will be the greateſt Glory of their Succeſſors.

To excite this Care, is the nobleſt Deſign of all religious Inſtruction. This, and nothing elſe, animates the following Pages. Here, God and Chriſt, Heaven and Holineſs, invite your moſt

moſt attentive and affectionate Regards. Here, you may peruſe, what Multitudes in the ſame Town have heard and read before you to their everlaſting Joy, till *your Bleſſings prevail above the Bleſſings of your Progenitors.* Here, by the Help of divine Grace, you may learn the heavenly Art of walking with God below, of living in a conſtant View and Foretaſte of the Glories of the *new Jeruſalem*, and of making all you ſay or do, ſuffer or enjoy, ſubſervient to the brightening your immortal Crown.--- Nothing has the Compiler of this Abridgment to wiſh like ſuch Conſequences as theſe; even, to ſee the ſame holy and heavenly

Converſation in himſelf, and in thoſe around him, now, as Mr. *Baxter* ſaw in his Day. This would be the greateſt Joy, and ſhall be the conſtant and fervent Prayer, of



Your affectionate Friend,

And obedient Servant,

B. FAWCETT.

Kidderminſter,
Jan. 1, 1759.

THE

PREFACE,

By the COMPILER of this ABRIDGMENT.

MR. *Richard Baxter*, the Author of the *Saints Reſt*, ſo well known to the World by this, and many other excellent and uſeful Writings, was a learned, laborious, and eminently holy Divine of the laſt Age. He was born near *Shrewſbury* in 1615, and died at *London* in 1691.

HIS *Miniſtry*, in an unſettled State, was for many Years employed with great and extenſive Succeſs, both in *London*, and in ſeveral Parts of the Country; but he was no where fixed ſo long, or with ſuch entire Satisfaction to himſelf, and apparent Advantage to others, as at *Kidderminſter*. His Abode there was indeed interrupted, partly by his bad Health, but chiefly by the Calamities of a civil War; yet in the whole it amounted to *ſixteen Years:* nor was it by any Means the Reſult of his own Choice, or

that

that of the Inhabitants of *Kidderminſter*, that he never ſettled there again, after his going from thence in 1660. Before his coming thither, the Place was overrun with Ignorance and Profaneneſs; but, by a divine Bleſſing on his wiſe and faithful Cultivation, the Fruits of Righteouſneſs ſprung up in a rich Abundance. He at firſt found but a ſingle Inſtance or two of *daily Family-Prayer* in a whole Street, and at his going away, but one Family or two could be found in ſome Streets that continued to neglect it. And on *Lord's Days*, inſtead of the open Profanation to which they had been ſo long accuſtomed, a Perſon, in paſſing through the Town, in the Intervals of public Worſhip, might overhear hundreds of Families engaged in ſinging Pſalms, reading the Scriptures, and other good Books, or ſuch Sermons as they had wrote down, while they heard them from the Pulpit. His Care of the Souls committed to his Charge, and the Succeſs of his Labours among them, were truly remarkable; for the Number of his ſtated Communicants roſe to *ſix hundred*, of whom, he himſelf declared, there were not *twelve* concerning whoſe ſincere Piety he had not Reaſon to entertain good Hopes. Bleſſed be God, the religious Spirit, which was thus happily introduced, is yet to be traced in the Town and Neighbourhood in ſome Degree; (O that it were in a greater!) and in Proportion as that Spirit remains, the Name of Mr. *Baxter* continues in the moſt honourable and affectionate Remembrance. As

As a *Writer* he has the Approbation of ſome of his greateſt Cotemporaries, who beſt knew him, and were under no Temptations to be partial in his Favour.——Dr. *Barrow* ſaid, "His "practical Writings were never mended, and "his controverſial ones ſeldom confuted."—— With a View to his caſuiſtical Writings, the Honourable *Robert Boyle*, Eſq; declared, "He "was the fitteſt Man of the Age for a Caſuiſt, "becauſe he feared no Man's Diſpleaſure, nor "hoped for any Man's Preferment."——Biſhop *Wilkins* obſerved of him, "that he had cultiva-"ted every Subject he had handled; that if he "had lived in the primitive Times, he would "have been one of the Fathers of the Church; "and that it was enough for one Age to pro-"duce ſuch a Perſon as Mr. *Baxter*."——Archbiſhop *Uſher* had ſuch high Thoughts of him, that by his earneſt Importunity he put him upon writing ſeveral of his practical Diſcourſes, particularly that celebrated Piece, his *Call to the Unconverted*.——Dr. *Manton*, as he freely expreſſed it, "thought Mr. *Baxter* came nearer "the apoſtolical Writings than any Man in the "Age."——And it is both as a *Preacher* and a *Writer*, that Dr. *Bates* conſiders him, when, in his funeral Sermon for him, he ſays, "In his "Sermons there was a rare Union of Argu-"ments and Motives, to convince the Mind "and gain the Heart. All the Fountains of "Reaſon and Perſuaſion were open to his diſ-"cerning Eye. There was no reſiſting the

"Force

" Force of his Diſcourſes, without denying
" Reaſon and divine Revelation. He had a
" marvellous Facility and Copiouſneſs in ſpeak-
" ing. There was a noble Negligence in his
" Stile, for his great Mind could not ſtoop to
" the affected Eloquence of Words; he deſ-
" piſed flaſhy Oratory; but his Expreſſions
" were clear and powerful, ſo convincing the
" Underſtanding, ſo entering into the Soul, ſo
" engaging the Affections, that thoſe were as
" deaf as Adders who were not charmed by ſo
" wiſe a Charmer. He was animated with the
" Holy Spirit, and breathed celeſtial Fire, to
" inſpire Heat and Life into dead Sinners, and
" to melt the obdurate in their frozen Tombs.
" —His Books, for their Number, [which it
" ſeems was more than one hundred and twen-
" ty,] and Variety of Matter in them, make a
" Library.——They contain a Treaſure of con-
" troverſial, caſuiſtical, and practical Divinity.
——His Books of practical Divinity have been
" effectual for more numerous Converſions of
" Sinners to God, than any printed in our
" Time; and, while the Church remains on
" Earth, will be of continual Efficacy to reco-
" ver loſt Souls. There is a vigorous Pulſe in
" them, that keeps the Reader awake and at-
" tentive."——To theſe Teſtimonies may not improperly be added that of the Editors of *his practical Works* in four Folio Volumes; in the Preface to which they ſay, " Perhaps there are
" no Writings among us that have more of a
" true

" true Chriſtian Spirit, a greater Mixture of " Judgment and Affection, or a greater Ten- " dency to revive pure and undefiled Religion, " that have been more eſteemed abroad, or " more bleſſed at home, for the awakening the " Secure, inſtructing the Ignorant, confirming " the Wavering, comforting the Dejected, reco- " vering the Prophane, or improving ſuch as " as are truly ſerious, than the practical Works " of this Author."——Such were the Apprehenſions of eminent Perſons, who were well acquainted with Mr. *Baxter* and his Writings. It is therefore the leſs remarkable that Mr. *Addiſon*, from an accidental and very imperfect Acquaintance, but with his uſual Pleaſantneſs and Candour, ſhould mention the following Incident; " I once met with a Page of Mr. *Baxter*. Up- " on the Peruſal of it, I conceived ſo good an " Idea of the Author's Piety, that I bought the " whole Book."

WHATEVER other Cauſes might occur, it muſt chiefly be aſcribed to Mr. *Baxter*'s diſtinguiſhing Reputation as a Preacher, and a Writer, that preſently after the *Reſtoration* he was appointed one of the *Chaplains in Ordinary* to King *Charles* II, and preached once before him in that Capacity; as alſo that he had an Offer made him by the Lord Chancellor *Clarendon*, of the *Biſhoprick of Hereford*, which, in a reſpectful Letter to his Lordſhip, he ſaw proper to decline.

THE

THE *Saints Reſt* is deſervedly eſteemed one of the moſt valuable Parts of his practical Works. He wrote it when he was far from Home, without any Book to conſult but his *Bible*, and in ſuch an ill State of Health, as to be in continual Expectation of Death for many Months; and therefore, merely for his own Uſe, he fixed his Thoughts on this heavenly Subject, "which "(ſays he) hath more benefitted me than all "the Studies of my Life." At this Time he could be little more than thirty Years old. He afterward preached over the Subject in his weekly Lecture at *Kidderminſter*, and in 1650 he publiſhed it; and indeed it appears to have been the firſt that ever he publiſhed of all his practical Writings. Of this Book Dr. *Bates* ſays, "It was written by him when languiſhing in "the Suſpence of Life and Death, but has the "Signatures of his holy and vigorous Mind. "To *allure our Deſires*, he unvails the Sanctua-"ry above, and diſcovers the Glories and Joys "of the Bleſſed in the divine Preſence, by a "Light ſo ſtrong and lively, that all the glit-"tering Vanities of this World vaniſh in that "Compariſon, and a ſincere Believer will deſ-"piſe them, as one of mature Age does the "Toys and Baubles of Children. To *excite* "*our Fear*, he removes the Skreen, and makes "the everlaſting Fire of Hell ſo viſible, and re-"preſents the tormenting Paſſions of the Dam-"ned in thoſe dreadful Colours, that, if duly "conſidered, would check and controul the un-

"bridled

"bridled licentious Appetites of the moſt ſen-
"ſual Wretches."

HEAVENLY Reſt is a Subject, in its own Nature, ſo univerſally important and intereſting, and at the ſame Time ſo truly engaging and delightful, as ſufficiently accounts for the great Acceptance which this Book has met with; and partly alſo for the uncommon Bleſſing which has attended Mr. *Baxter*'s Manner of treating the Subject, both from the Pulpit, and the Preſs. For where are the Operations of divine Grace more reaſonably to be expected, or where have they in Fact been more frequently diſcerned, than in Concurrence with the beſt adapted Means? And ſhould it appear, that Perſons of diſtinguiſhing Judgment and Piety, have expreſsly aſcribed their firſt religious Impreſſions to the hearing or reading the important Sentiments contained in this Book; or after a long Series of Years, have found it, both the Counterpart, and the Improvement, of their own divine Life, will not this be thought a conſiderable Recommendation of the Book itſelf?

AMONG the Inſtances of Perſons that dated their true Converſion from hearing the Sermons on the *Saints Reſt*, when Mr. *Baxter* firſt preached them, was the Rev. Mr. *Thomas Doolittle*, M. A. who was a Native of *Kidderminſter*, and at that Time a Scholar, about ſeventeen Years old; whom Mr. *Baxter* himſelf afterwards ſent to *Pembroke-Hall*, in *Cambridge*, where he took his Degree. Before his going to the Univerſity, he

he was upon Trial as an Attorney's Clerk, and under that Character, being ordered by his Maſter to write ſomething on a *Lord's Day*, he obeyed with great Reluctance, and the next Day returned home, with an earneſt Deſire that he might not apply himſelf to any Thing, as the Employment of Life, but ſerving Chriſt in the Miniſtry of the Goſpel. His Praiſe is yet in the Churches, for his pious and uſeful Labours, as a Miniſter, a Tutor, and a Writer.

IN the Life of the Rev. Mr. *John Janeway*, *Fellow of King's College, Cambridge*, who died in 1657, we are told that his Converſion was, in a great Meaſure, occaſioned by his reading ſeveral Parts of the *Saints Reſt*. And in a Letter which he afterwards wrote to a near Relative, ſpeaking with a more immediate Reference to that Part of the Book which treats of *heavenly Contemplation*, he ſays, "There is a Duty, "which if it were exerciſed, would diſpell all "Cauſe of Melancholy; I mean, heavenly Me-"ditation, and Contemplation of the Things "which true Chriſtian Religion tends to. If we "did but walk cloſely with God one Hour in "a Day in this Duty, oh, what an Influence "would it have upon the whole Day beſides, "and, duly performed, upon the whole Life! "This Duty, with its Uſefulneſs, Manner, and "Directions, I knew in ſome Meaſure before, "but had it more preſſed upon me by Mr. *Bax-*"*ter's Saints everlaſting Reſt*, [a Book] that can "ſcarce be over-valued, for which I have Cauſe

"for

" for ever to bleſs God."——This excellent young Miniſter's Life is worth reading, were it only to ſee how delightfully he was engaged in heavenly Contemplation, according to the Directions in the *Saints Reſt*.

IT was the *Example of Heavenly Contemplation*, at the Cloſe of this Book, which the Rev. Mr. *Joſeph Alleine*, of *Taunton*, ſo frequently quoted in Converſation, with this ſolemn Introduction, " Moſt divinely ſays that Man of " God, holy Mr. *Baxter*."

DR. *Bates*, in his Dedication of his funeral Sermon for Mr. *Baxter* to Sir *Henry Aſhurſt*, Bart. tells that religious Gentleman, and moſt diſtinguiſhed Friend and Executor of Mr. *Baxter*, " He was moſt worthy of your high- " eſt Eſteem and Love; for the firſt Impreſ- " ſions of Heaven upon your Soul, were in " reading his invaluable Book of the *Saints* " *everlaſting Reſt*."

IN the Life of the Rev. Mr. *Matthew Henry*, we have the following Character given us of *Robert Warburton*, Eſq; of *Grange*, the Son of the eminently religious Judge *Warburton*, and the Father of Mr. *Matthew Henry*'s ſecond Wife, " He was a Gentleman that greatly affected " Retirement and Privacy, eſpecially in the " latter Part of his Life; the *Bible*, and Mr. " *Baxter's Saints everlaſting Reſt*, uſed to lie " daily before him on the Table in his Parlour; " he ſpent the greateſt Part of his Time in rea- " ding and Prayer."

IN the Life of that honourable and moſt religious Knight, Sir *Nathaniel Barnardiſton*, we are told, "that he was conſtant in ſecret Prayer "and reading the Scriptures; afterwards he "read other choice Authors: But not long be- "fore his Death he took ſingular Delight to "read Mr. *Baxter's Saints everlaſting Reſt*, and "Preparation thereunto; which was eſteemed "a gracious Event of divine Providence, ſending "it as a Guide to bring him more ſpeedily and "directly to that Reſt."

BESIDES Perſons of Eminence, to whom this Book has been precious and profitable, we have an Inſtance, in the Rev. Mr. *James Janeway's Token for Children*, of a little Boy, whoſe Piety was ſo diſcovered and promoted by reading it, as the moſt delightful Book to him next the *Bible*, that the Thoughts of everlaſting Reſt ſeemed, even while he continued in Health, to ſwallow up all other Thoughts; and he lived in a conſtant Preparation for it, and looked more like one that was ripe for Glory, than an Inhabitant of this lower World. And when he was in the Sickneſs of which he died, before he was twelve Years old, he ſaid, "I pray let me "have Mr. *Baxter's* Book, that I may read a "little more of Eternity, before I go into it."

NOR is it leſs obſerveable, that Mr. *Baxter* himſelf, taking Notice, in a Paper found in his Study after his Death, what Numbers of Perſons were converted by reading his *Call to the Uncon-*

Unconverted, Accounts of which he had received by Letter every Week, expreſsly adds, "This "little Book [the *Call to the Unconverted*] "God hath bleſſed with unexpected Succeſs, "beyond all that I have written, *except the* "*Saints Reſt.*" With an evident Reference to this Book, and even during the Life of the Author, the pious Mr. *Flavell* affectionately ſays, "Mr. *Baxter* is almoſt in Heaven; living in "the daily Views, and chearful Expectation of "*the Saints everlaſting Reſt with God*; and is "left for a little while among us, as a great "Example of the Life of Faith."——And Mr. *Baxter* himſelf ſays, in his Preface to his *Treatiſe of Self-Denial*, "I muſt ſay, that of all the "Books which I have written, I peruſe none "ſo often for the Uſe of my own Soul in "its daily Work, as my *Life of Faith*, this "of *Self-Denial*, and the laſt Part of the *Saints Reſt.*"——On the whole it is not without good Reaſon that Dr. *Calamy* remarks concerning it, "This is a Book, for which Multitudes will "have cauſe to bleſs God for ever."

THIS excellent and uſeful Book now appears in the Form of an Abridgment; and therefore, it is preſumed, will be the more likely, under a divine Bleſſing, to diffuſe its ſalutary Influence among thoſe that would otherwiſe have wanted Opportunity or Inclination to read over the large Volume. In reducing it to this ſmaller Size, I have been very deſirous to do Juſtice to the *Author*, and at the ſame Time promote the

Pleaſure and Profit of the ſerious *Reader*. And, I hope, thoſe Ends are, in ſome Meaſure, anſwered; chiefly by dropping Things of a digreſſive, controverſial, or metaphyſical Nature; together with Prefaces, Dedications, and various Alluſions to ſome peculiar Circumſtances of the laſt Age; and particularly, by throwing ſeveral Chapters into one, that the Number of them may better correſpond with the Size of the Volume; and ſometimes by altering the Form, but not the Senſe, of a Period, for the Sake of Brevity; and when an obſolete Phraſe occurred, changing it for one more common and intelligible. I ſhould never have thought of attempting this Work, if it had not been ſuggeſted and urged by others, and by ſome very reſpectable Names, of whoſe Learning, Judgment, and Piety, I forbear to avail myſelf. However defective this Performance may appear, the Labour of it (if it may be called a Labour) has been, I bleſs God, one of the moſt delightful Labours of my Life.

Certainly the Thoughts of *everlaſting Reſt* may be as delightful to Souls in the preſent Day, as they have ever been to thoſe of paſt Generations. I am ſure ſuch Thoughts are as abſolutely neceſſary now; nor are Temptations to neglect them, either fewer, or weaker, now than formerly. The Worth of everlaſting Reſt is not felt, becauſe it is not conſidered; it is forgotten, becauſe a thouſand Trifles are preferred before it. But were the divine Reaſonings

ſonings of this Book duly attended to, (and oh that the Spirit and Grace of a Redeemer may make them ſo!) then an Age of Vanity would become ſerious; Minds, enervated by Senſuality, would ſoon reſume the Strength of Reaſon, and diſplay the Excellence of Chriſtianity; the deluſive Names of Pleaſure would be blotted out, by the glorious Reality of heavenly Joy upon Earth; every Station and Relation in Life would be filled up with the Propriety and Dignity of ſerious Religion; every Member of Society would then effectually contribute to the Beauty and Happineſs of the whole; and every Soul would be ready for Life or Death, for one World or another, in a well grounded and chearful Perſuaſion of having ſecured a Title to that *Reſt which remaineth to the People of God.*

B. F.

Kidderminſter,
Dec. 25. 1758.

BOOKS published by the Rev. Mr. BENJ. FAWCETT. *Printed and sold by* J. Cotton, *and* J. Eddowes, *in* Shrewsbury, *and* J. Buckland *at the* Buck *in* Pater-Noster-Row, LONDON.

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THE
SAINTS Everlasting REST.

HEBREWS iv. 9.
There remaineth therefore a Rest to the People of God.

CHAP. I.

The Introduction to the Work, with some Account of the Nature of the Saints Rest.

§ 1. *The important Design of the Apostle in the Text, to which the Author earnestly bespeaks the Attention of the Reader.* § 2. *The Saints Rest defined, with a general Plan of the Work.* § 3. *What this Rest presupposes.* § 4. *The Author's humble Sense of his Inability fully to shew what this Rest contains.* § 5. *It contains* (1) *A ceasing from Means of Grace;* § 6. (2) *A perfect Freedom from all Evils;* § 7. (3) *The highest Degree of the Saints personal Perfections, both in Body and Soul;* § 8. (4) *The nearest Enjoyment of God the chief Good;* § 9—14. (5) *A sweet and constant Action of all the Powers of Soul and Body in this Enjoyment of God; as, for Instance, Bodily Senses, Knowledge, Memory, Love, Joy, together with a mutual Love and Joy.* § 15. *The Author's humble Reflection on the Deficiency of this Account.*

§ 1. IT was not only our Intereſt in God, and actual Enjoyment of him, which was loſt in *Adam*'s Fall, but all ſpiritual Knowledge of him, and true Diſpoſition towards ſuch a Felicity. When the Son of God comes with recovering Grace, and Diſcoveries of a ſpiritual and eternal Happineſs and Glory, he finds not Faith in Man to believe it. As the poor Man, that would not believe any one had ſuch a Sum as a hundred Pounds, it was ſo far above what himſelf poſſeſſed; ſo Men will hardly *now* believe there is ſuch a Happineſs as *once* they had, much leſs as Chriſt hath now procured. When God would give the *Iſraelites* his Sabbaths of Reſt, in a Land of Reſt, he had more ado to make them believe it, than to overcome their Enemies, and procure it for them. And when they had it, only as a ſmall Intimation and Earneſt of an incomparably more glorious Reſt thro' Chriſt, they yet believe no more than they poſſeſs, but ſay, with the Glutton at the Feaſt, *Sure there's no other Heaven but this.* Or, if they expect more by the *Meſſiah*, it is only the Increaſe of their earthly Felicity. The *Apoſtle* beſtows moſt of this *Epiſtle* againſt this Diſtemper, and clearly and largely proves, that the End of all Ceremonies and Shadows, is to direct them to Jeſus Chriſt the Subſtance; and that the *Reſt* of *Sabbaths*, and *Canaan* ſhould teach them, to look for a farther Reſt, which indeed is their Happineſs. My Text is his Concluſion, after divers Arguments; a Concluſion,



cluſion, which contains the Ground of all the Believer's Comfort, the End of all his Duty and Sufferings, the Life and Sum of all Goſpel-Promiſes and *Chriſtian*-Privileges. What more welcome to Men, under perſonal Afflictions, tireing Duties, Succeſſions of Sufferings, than Reſt? It is not our Comfort only, but our Stability. Our Livelineſs in all Duties, our enduring Tribulation, our honouring of God, the Vigour of our Love, Thankfulneſs, and all our Graces; yea, the very Being of our Religion and Chriſtianity, depend on the *believing ſerious Thoughts of our Reſt*. And now, *Reader*, whatever thou art, young or old, rich or poor, I intreat thee, and charge thee, in the Name of thy Lord, who will ſhortly call thee to a Reckoning, and judge thee to thy everlaſting unchangeable State, that thou give not theſe Things the Reading only, and ſo diſmiſs them with a bare Approbation; but that thou ſet upon this Work, and take God in Chriſt for thy only Reſt, and fix thy Heart upon him above all. May the living God, who is the Portion and Reſt of his Saints, make theſe our carnal Minds ſo ſpiritual, and our earthly Hearts ſo heavenly, that loving him, and delighting in him, may be the Work of our Lives; and that neither I that write, nor you that read, this Book, may ever be turned from this Path of Life; *leſt a Promiſe being left us of entering into*

his Reſt, we *ſhould come ſhort of it*, thro' our Unbelief or Negligence (a)!

§ 2. THE *Saints Reſt* is, "the moſt happy "State of a Chriſtian;" or it is, "the perfect "endleſs Enjoyment of God by the perfected "Saints, according to the Meaſure of their "Capacity, to which their Souls arrive at Death, "and both Soul and Body moſt fully after the "Reſurrection and final Judgment." According to this Definition of the *Saints Reſt*, a larger Account of its *Nature* will be given in *this Chapter*; of its *Preparatives (Chap. 2)*; its *Excellencies (Chap. 3)*; and *(Chap. 4) the Perſons for whom it is deſigned.* Farther to illuſtrate the Subject, ſome Deſcription will be given *(Chap. 5)* of *their Miſery who loſe this Reſt*, and *(Chap 6) who alſo loſe the Enjoyments of Time, and ſuffer the Torments of Hell:* Next will be ſhewed *(Chap. 7) the Neceſſity of diligently ſeeking this Reſt*; *(Chap. 8) how our Title to it may be diſcerned*; *(Chap. 9)* that *they who diſcern their Title to it ſhould help thoſe that cannot*; and *(Chap. 10)* that *this Reſt is not to be expected on Earth.* It will then be proper to conſider *(Chap. 11) the Importance of a heavenly Life upon Earth*; *(Chap. 12) how to live a heavenly Life upon Earth*; *(Chap. 13) the Nature of heavenly Contemplation, with the Time, Place, and Temper fitteſt for it*; *(Chap. 14) what Uſe heavenly Contemplation makes of Conſideration, Affections,*

(a) Heb. iv. 1.

Affections, Soliloquy, and Prayer; and likewiſe *(Chap. 15) how heavenly Contemplation may be aſſiſted by ſenſible Objects, and guarded againſt a treacherous Heart. Heavenly Contemplation* will be *exemplified, (Chap. 16) and the whole Work concluded.*

§ 3. THERE are *ſome Things neceſſarily preſuppoſed in the Nature of this Reſt*; as for Inſtance, ——that *mortal Men are the Perſons ſeeking it.* For Angels and glorified Spirits have it already, and the Devils and Damned are paſt Hope.——That *they chuſe God only for their End and Happineſs.* He that takes any Thing elſe for his Happineſs, is out of the Way the firſt Step.——That *they are diſtant from this End.* This is the woeful Caſe of all Mankind ſince the Fall. When Chriſt comes with regenerating Grace, he finds no man ſitting ſtill, but all poſting to eternal Ruin, and making haſte towards Hell; till, by Conviction, he firſt brings them to a Stand, and then, by Converſion, turns their Hearts and Lives ſincerely to himſelf.——*This End, and its Excellency is* ſuppoſed to be *known, and ſeriouſly intended.* An unknown Good moves not to deſire or endeavour.——And not only a Diſtance from this Reſt, but *the true Knowledge of this Diſtance,* is alſo ſuppoſed. They that never yet knew they were without God, and in the Way to Hell, did never yet know the Way to Heaven. Can a Man find he hath loſt his God, and his Soul, and not cry out, *I am undone?* The Rea-

ſon why ſo few obtain this Reſt, is, they will not be convinced that they are, in Point of Title, diſtant from it; and, in Point of Practice, contrary to it. Who ever ſought for that, which he knew not he had loſt? *They that be whole need not a Phyſician, but they that are ſick* (b).—*The Influence of a ſuperior moving Cauſe* is alſo ſuppoſed; elſe we ſhall all ſtand ſtill, and not move toward our Reſt. If God move us not, we cannot move. It is a moſt neceſſary Part of our Chriſtian Wiſdom, to keep our Subordination to God, and Dependance on him. *We are not ſufficient of ourſelves to think any Thing as of ourſelves, but our Sufficiency is of God* (c). *Without me*, ſays Chriſt, *ye can do nothing* (d).—It is next ſuppoſed, that *they, who ſeek this Reſt, have an inward Principle of ſpiritual Life.* God does not move Men like Stones, but he endows them with Life, not to enable them to move without him, but in Subordination to himſelf the firſt Mover.—And farther, this Reſt ſuppoſes *ſuch an actual Tendency of Soul towards it, as is regular and conſtant, earneſt and laborious.* He that hides his Talent, ſhall receive the Wages of a ſlothful Servant. Chriſt is the Door, the only Way to this Reſt. But *ſtrait is the Gate, and narrow is the Way* (e); and we muſt *ſtrive*, if we will *enter, for many will ſeek to enter in, and ſhall not be able* (f); which implies, that *the*

(b) Matt. ix. 12.
(c) 2 Cor. iii. 5.
(d) John xv. 5.
(e) Matt. vii. 13.
(f) Luke xiii. 24.

the Kingdom of Heaven ſuffereth Violence (g). Nor will it bring us to the End of the Saints, if we *begin in the Spirit, and end in the Fleſh* (h). *He* only *that endureth to the End ſhall be ſaved* (i). And never did a Soul obtain Reſt with God, whoſe Deſire was not ſet upon him above all Things elſe in the World. *Where your Treaſure is, there will your Heart be alſo* (k). The Remainder of our old Nature will much weaken and interrupt theſe Deſires, but never overcome them. And, conſidering the Oppoſition to our Deſires, from the contrary Principles in our Nature, and from the Weakneſs of our Graces, together with our continued Diſtance from the End, our Tendency to that End muſt be laborious, and with all our Might.—All theſe Things are preſuppoſed, in order to a Chriſtian's obtaining an Intereſt in heavenly Reſt.

§ 4. Now we have aſcended theſe Steps into the outward Court, may we look within the Vail? May we *ſhew what this Reſt contains*, as well as what it preſuppoſes? Alas, how little know I of that Glory! The Glimpſe which *Paul* had, contained what could not, or muſt not, be uttered. Had he ſpoke the Things of Heaven in the Language of Heaven, and none underſtood that Language, what the better? The Lord reveal to me what I may reveal to you! The Lord open ſome Light, and ſhew both you and me our Inheritance! Not as to *Balaam*

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(g) Matt. xi. 12. (h) Gal. iii. 3.
(i) Matt. xxiv. 13. (k) Matt. vi. 21.

only, whoſe Eyes were open to ſee the Goodlineſs of *Jacob*'s Tents, and *Iſrael*'s Tabernacles, where he had no Portion, and from whence muſt come his own Deſtruction! Not as to *Moſes*, who had only a Diſcovery, inſtead of Poſſeſſion, and ſaw the Land which he never entered! But as the Pearl was revealed to the Merchant in the Goſpel, who reſted not, till he had ſold all he had, and bought it! And as the Heaven was opened to bleſſed *Stephen*, which he was ſhortly to enter, and the Glory ſhewed him, which ſhould be his own Poſſeſſion!—The Things contained in heavenly Reſt are ſuch as theſe;—*a ceaſing from Means of Grace*;—*a perfect Freedom from all Evils*;—*the higheſt Degree of the Saints perſonal Perfection, both of Body and Soul*—*the neareſt Enjoyment of God the chief Good*;—and *a ſweet and conſtant Action of all the Powers of Body and Soul in this Enjoyment of God.*

§ 5. (1) One Thing contained in heavenly Reſt, is, *the ceaſing from Means of Grace.* When we have obtained the Haven, we have done ſailing. When the Workman receives his Wages, it is implied he has done his Work. When we are at our Journey's End, we have done with the Way. *Whether Prophecies, they ſhall fail*; *whether Tongues, they ſhall ceaſe*; *whether Knowledge, it* alſo, ſo far as it had the Nature of Means, *ſhall vaniſh away* (l). There ſhall be no more Prayer, becauſe no more Neceſſity,

(l) 1 Cor. xiii. 8.

ceſſity, but the full Enjoyment of what we prayed for: Neither ſhall we need to faſt and weep, and watch any more, being out of the Reach of Sin and Temptations. Preaching is done; the Miniſtry of Man ceaſeth; Sacraments become uſeleſs; the Labourers are called in, becauſe the Harveſt is gathered, the Tares burned, and the Work finiſhed; the Unregenerate paſt Hope, and the Saints paſt Fear, for ever.

§ 6. (2) THERE is in heavenly Reſt *a perfect Freedom from all Evils.* All the Evils that accompanied us through our Courſe, and which neceſſarily follow our Abſence from the chief Good: Beſides our Freedom from thoſe eternal Flames, and reſtleſs Miſeries, which the Neglecters of Chriſt and Grace muſt remedileſsly endure; a woeful Inheritance, which, both by Birth and actual Merit, was due to us, as well as to them! In Heaven there is *nothing that defileth*, or is unclean: All *that* remains *without* (m). And doubtleſs there is not ſuch a Thing as Grief and Sorrow known there: Nor is there ſuch a Thing as a pale Face, a languid Body, feeble Joints, unable Infancy, decrepit Age, peccant Humours, painful or pining Sickneſs, griping Fears, conſuming Cares, nor whatſoever deſerves the Name of Evil. We did *weep and lament*, when *the World did rejoice*; but our *Sorrow is turned into Joy, and* our *Joy ſhall no Man take from* us (n).

§ 7. (3)

(m) Rev. xxi 27. xxii. 15. (n) John xvi. 20, 22.

§ 3. (3) ANOTHER Ingredient of this Reſt is, *the higheſt Degree of the Saints perſonal Perfection, both of Body and Soul.* Were the Glory ever ſo great, and themſelves not made capable of it, by a perſonal Perfection ſuitable thereto, it would be little to them. *Eye hath not ſeen, nor Ear heard, neither have entered into the Heart of Man, the Things which God hath prepared for them that love him* (o). For the Eye of Fleſh is not capable of ſeeing them, nor this Ear of hearing them, nor this Heart of underſtanding them: But there the Eye, and Ear, and Heart, are made capable; elſe how do they enjoy them? The more perfect the Sight is, the more delightful the beautiful Object. The more perfect the Appetite, the ſweeter the Food. The more muſical the Ear, the more pleaſant the Melody. The more perfect the Soul, the more joyous thoſe Joys, and the more glorious to us is that Glory.

§ 8. (4) The principal Part of this Reſt, is *our neareſt Enjoyment of God the chief Good.* And here, *Reader*, wonder not if I be at a Loſs; and if my Apprehenſions receive but little of that which is in my Expreſſions. If *it did not appear*, to the beloved Diſciple, *what we ſhall be*, but only in general, that *when Chriſt ſhall appear we ſhall be like him* (p), no Wonder if I know ſo little. When I know ſo little of God, I cannot much know what it is to enjoy him. If

(o) 1 Cor. ii. 9. (p) 1 John iii. 2.

If I know ſo little of Spirits, how little of the Father of Spirits, or the State of my own Soul, when advanced to the Enjoyment of him? I ſtand and look upon a Heap of Ants, and ſee them all with one View; they know not me, my Being, Nature, or Thoughts, tho' I am their Fellow-Creature; how little then muſt we know of the great Creator, tho' he with one View clearly beholds us all? A Glimpſe the Saints *behold as in a Glaſs* (q); which makes us capable of ſome poor, dark Apprehenſions of what we ſhall behold in Glory. If I ſhould tell a Worldling what the Holineſs and ſpiritual Joys of the Saints on Earth are, he cannot know; for Grace cannot be clearly known without Grace; how much leſs could he conceive it, ſhould I tell him of this Glory? But to the Saints I may be ſomewhat more encouraged to ſpeak; for Grace gives them a dark Knowledge and ſlight Taſte of Glory. If Men and Angels ſhould ſtudy to ſpeak the Bleſſedneſs of that State in one Word, what could they ſay beyond this, that it is the neareſt Enjoyment of God? O the full Joys offered to a Believer in that one Sentence of Chriſt, *Father, I will that thoſe whom thou haſt given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory which thou haſt given me* (r)! Every Word full of Life and Joy. If the Queen of *Sheba* had Cauſe to ſay of *Solomon*'s Glory, *Happy are thy Men, happy are*

(q) 2 Cor. iii. 18. (r) John xvii. 24.

are thy Servants, which ſtand continually before thee, and that hear thy Wiſdom (s); then ſure they that ſtand continually before God, and ſee his Glory, and the Glory of the Lamb, are more than happy. To them will Chriſt *give to eat of the Tree of Life*; and *to eat of the hidden Manna*; yea, he will *make them Pillars in the Temple of God, and they ſhall go no more out*; *and he will write upon them the Name of his God, and the Name of the City of his God, which is new Jeruſalem, which cometh down out of Heaven from his God, and he will write upon them his new Name*; yea, more, if more may be, he *will grant them to ſit with him on his Throne. Theſe are they which come out of great Tribulation, and have waſhed their Robes, and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb: Therefore are they before the Throne of God, and ſerve him Day and Night in his Temple, and he that ſitteth on the Throne ſhall dwell among them; The Lamb which is in the Midſt of the Throne ſhall feed them, and ſhall lead them to living Fountains of Water; and God ſhall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes* (t). O blind, deceived World! Can you ſhew us ſuch a Glory? *This* is the City of our God, where *the Tabernacle of God is with Men, and he will dwell with them, and they ſhall be his People, and God himſelf ſhall be with them, and be their God. The Glory of*

(s) 1 Kings x. 8. (t) Rev. ii. 7, 17. iii. 12, 21. vii. 14, 15, 17.

of God ſhall lighten it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof. And there ſhall be no more Curſe; but the Throne of God and of the Lamb ſhall be in it; and his Servants ſhall ſerve him, and they ſhall ſee his Face, and his Name ſhall be in their Foreheads. Theſe Sayings are faithful and true, and the Things which muſt ſhortly be done (u). And now we ſay, as *Mephiboſheth, let* the World *take all, foraſmuch as our Lord will come in Peace* (w). *Rejoice* therefore *in the Lord, O ye Righteous*, and ſay with his Servant *David, the Lord is the Portion of mine Inheritance: The Lines are fallen unto me in pleaſant Places; yea, I have a goodly Heritage. I have ſet the Lord always before me, becauſe he is at my right Hand I ſhall not be moved. Therefore my Heart is glad, and my Glory rejoiceth; my Fleſh alſo ſhall reſt in Hope. For thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell, neither wilt thou ſuffer thine Holy One to ſee Corruption. Thou wilt ſhew me the Path of Life; in thy Preſence is Fulneſs of Joy, at thy right Hand there are Pleaſures for evermore* (x). What Preſumption would it have been, once to have thought or ſpoke of ſuch a Thing, if God had not ſpoken it before us? I durſt not have thought of the Saints Preferment in this Life, as Scripture ſets it forth, had it not been the expreſs Truth of God. How indecent, to talk of being *Sons of God—ſpeaking to him—having Fellowſhip with him—dwelling in him and he in*

(u) Rev. xxi. 3, 24. xxii. 3, 4, 6. (w) 2 Sam. xix. 30.
(x) Pſalm xxxi. 1. xvi. 5, 6, 8—11.

in us (y); if this had not been God's own Language? How much leſs durſt we have once thought of *ſhining forth as the Sun*—of being *Joint-heirs with Chriſt*—of *judging the World*—of *ſitting on Chriſt's Throne*—of being *one in him and the Father* (z); if we had not all this from the Mouth, and under the Hand, of God? But, *hath he ſaid, and ſhall he not do it? Hath he ſpoken, and ſhall he not make it good* (a)? Yes, as the Lord God is true, *thus ſhall it be done to the Man, whom Chriſt delighteth to honour* (b). Be of good Chear, *Chriſtian*; the Time is near, when God and thou ſhalt be near, and as near as thou canſt well deſire. Thou ſhalt dwell in his Family. Is that enough? It is better to *be a Door-keeper in the Houſe of God, than to dwell in the Tents of Wickedneſs* (c). Thou ſhalt ever ſtand before him, about his Throne, in the Room with him, in his Preſence-Chamber. Wouldſt thou yet be nearer? Thou ſhalt be his Child, and he thy Father; thou ſhalt be an Heir of his Kingdom; yea more, the Spouſe of his Son. And what more canſt thou deſire? Thou ſhalt be a Member of the Body of his Son; he ſhall be thy Head; thou ſhalt be one with him, who is one with the Father; as he himſelf hath deſired for thee of his Father; *that they all may be one, as thou, Father,*

(y) 1 John iii. 1. Gen. xviii. 27. 1 John i. 3. iv. 16. (z) Matt. xiii. 43. Rom. viii. 17. 1 Cor. vi. 2. Rev. iii. 21. John xvii. 21. (a) Numb. xxiii. 19. (b) Eſther vi. 11. (c) Pſalm. lxxxiv. 10.

Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they alſo may be one in us; and the Glory which thou gaveſt me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the World may know that thou has ſent me, and haſt loved them as thou haſt loved me (d).

§ 9. (5) We muſt add, that this Reſt contains *a ſweet and conſtant Action of all the Powers of the Soul and Body in this Enjoyment of God.* It is not the Reſt of a Stone, which ceaſeth from all Motion when it attains the Centre.— This *Body* ſhall be ſo changed, that it ſhall no more be *Fleſh and Blood*, which *cannot inherit the Kingdom of God*; but *a ſpiritual Body.* We *ſow not that Body that ſhall be, but God giveth it a Body as it hath pleaſed him, and to every Seed his own Body* (e). If *Grace* makes a Chriſtian differ ſo much from what he was, as to ſay, *I am not the Man I was*; how much more will *Glory* make us differ? As much as a Body ſpiritual, above the Sun in Glory, exceeds theſe frail, noiſome, diſeaſed Lumps of Fleſh, ſo far ſhall our *Senſes* exceed thoſe we now poſſeſs. Doubtleſs as God advanceth our Senſes, and enlargeth our Capacity, ſo will he advance the Happineſs of thoſe Senſes, and fill up with himſelf all that Capacity. Certainly the Body ſhould not be raiſed up, and continued, if it ſhould not ſhare in the Glory. As it hath ſhared in the Obedi-

(d) John xvii. 21—23. (e) 1 Cor. xv. 50, 44, 37, 38.

Obedience and Sufferings, ſo ſhall it alſo in the Bleſſedneſs. As Chriſt bought the whole Man, ſo ſhall the whole partake of the everlaſting Benefits of the Purchaſe. O Bleſſed Employment of a glorified Body! to ſtand before the Throne of God and the Lamb, and to ſound forth for ever, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive Glory, and Honour, and Power. Worthy is the Lamb that was ſlain, to receive Power, and Riches, and Wiſdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Bleſſing; for thou haſt redeemed us to God by thy Blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation, and haſt made us unto our God Kings and Prieſts. Alleluia, Salvation, and Glory, and Honour, and Power, unto the Lord our God. Alleluia, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.* O *Chriſtians!* This is the bleſſed Reſt; a Reſt, as it were, without Reſt; for *they reſt not Day and Night, ſaying, Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come* (f). ——And if the *Body* ſhall be thus employed, oh, how ſhall the *Soul* be taken up! As its Powers and Capacities are greateſt, ſo its Actions are ſtrongeſt, and its Enjoyments ſweeteſt. As the Bodily Senſes have their proper Action, whereby they receive and enjoy their Objects, ſo does the Soul in its own Action enjoy its own Object, by *knowing, remembering, loving, and delightful joying*. This is the Soul's En-

(f) Rev. iv. 11. v. 12, 9, 10. xix. 1, 6. iv. 8.

Enjoyment. By theſe Eyes it ſees, and by theſe Arms it embraces.

§ 10. *Knowledge* of itſelf is very deſirable. As far as the *Rational* Soul exceeds the *Senſitive*, ſo far the Delights of a *Philoſopher*, in diſcovering the Secrets of Nature, and knowing the Myſtery of Sciences, exceed the Delights of the *Glutton*, the *Drunkard*, the *Unclean*, and of all voluptuous *Senſualiſts* whatſoever. So excellent is all Truth. What then is their Delight, who know the God of Truth? How noble a Faculty of the Soul is this *Underſtanding?* It can compaſs the Earth; it can meaſure the Sun, Moon, Stars, and Heaven; it can foreknow each Eclipſe to a Minute many Years before. But this is the Top of all its Excellency, that it can know God, who is infinite, who made all theſe; a little here, and more, much more hereafter. O the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of our bleſſed Lord! He hath created the Underſtanding with a natural Bias and Inclination to Truth, as its Object; and to the prime Truth, as its prime Object. *Chriſtian*, when, after long gazing Heaven-ward, thou haſt got a Glimpſe of Chriſt, doſt thou not ſometime ſeem to have been with *Paul* in *the third Heaven*, *whether in the Body*, *or out*, and to have ſeen what is *unutterable* (g)? Art thou not, with *Peter*, ready to ſay, "*Maſter*, *it is good* "*to be here* (h)? Oh that I might dwell in this "Mount! Oh that I might ever ſee what I now

(g) 2 Cor. xii. 2—4. (h) Mark ix. 5.

" ſee!" Didſt thou never look ſo long upon the Sun of Righteouſneſs, till thine Eyes were dazzled with his aſtoniſhing Glory? And did not the Splendor of it make all Things below ſeem black and dark to thee? Eſpecially in thy Day of Suffering for Chriſt, when he uſually appears moſt manifeſtly to his People, didſt thou never *ſee* one *walking in the Midſt of the fiery Furnace* with thee *like the Son of God* (i)? Believe me, *Chriſtians*, yea, believe God; you that have known moſt of God in Chriſt here, it is as Nothing to what you ſhall know; it ſcarce, in Compariſon of that, deſerves to be called Knowledge. For as theſe Bodies, ſo that Knowledge, muſt ceaſe, that a more perfect may ſucceed. *Knowledge ſhall vaniſh away. For we know in Part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in Part ſhall be done away. When I was a Child, I ſpake as a Child, I underſtood as a Child, I thought as a Child; but when I became a Man, I put away childiſh Things. For now we ſee thro' a Glaſs darkly, but then Face to Face; now I know in Part, but then ſhall I know even as alſo I am known* (k). Marvel not therefore, *Chriſtian*, how it can be *Life eternal, to know God, and Jeſus Chriſt* (l). To enjoy God and Chriſt, is eternal Life; and the Soul's enjoying is in knowing. They that ſavour only of Earth, and conſult with Fleſh, think it a poor Happineſs to know God. But *we know that we are of God, and*

(i) Dan. iii. 25. (k) 1 Cor. xiii. 8—12. (l) John xvii. 3.

and the whole World lieth in Wickedneſs; and we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an Underſtanding that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jeſus Chriſt. This is the true God, and eternal Life (m).

§ 11. The *Memory* will not be idle, or uſeleſs, in this bleſſed Work. From that Height the Saint can look behind him, and before him. And to compare *paſt* with *preſent Things*, muſt needs raiſe in the bleſſed Soul an inconceivable Eſteem and Senſe of its Condition. To ſtand on that *Mount*, whence we can ſee the *Wilderneſs* and *Canaan*, both at once; to ſtand in *Heaven*, and look back on *Earth*, and weigh them together in the Balance of a comparing Senſe and Judgment, how muſt it needs tranſport the Soul, and make it cry out, "Is "this the Purchaſe that coſt ſo dear as the "Blood of Chriſt? No Wonder. O bleſſed "Price! and thrice bleſſed Love, that in-"vented and condeſcended! Is this the End of "Believing? Is this the End of the Spirit's "Workings? Have the Gales of Grace blown "me into ſuch an Harbour? Is it hither that "Chriſt hath allured my Soul? O bleſſed "*Way*, and thrice bleſſed *End!* Is this the "Glory which the Scriptures ſpoke of, and "Miniſters preached of ſo much? I ſee the "Goſpel is indeed good Tidings, even Ti-"dings of Peace and good Things, Tidings of "great Joy to all Nations! Is my Mourning,

(m) 1 John v. 19, 20.

" my Faſting, my ſad Humblings, my heavy
" Walking, come to this? Is my praying,
" watching, fearing to offend. come to this?
" Are all my Afflictions, Satan's Temptations,
" the World's Scorns and Jeers, come to this?
" —— O vile Nature, that reſiſted ſo much,
" and ſo long, ſuch a Bleſſing! Unworthy
" Soul, is this the Place thou cameſt ſo un-
" willingly to? Was Duty weariſome? Was
" the World too good to loſe? Didſt thou
" ſtick at leaving all, denying all, and ſuffer-
" ing any Thing, for *this?* Waſt thou loth
" to die, to come to *this?* O falſe Heart,
" thou hadſt almoſt betrayed me to eternal
" Flames, and loſt me this Glory! Art thou
" not aſhamed, my Soul, that ever thou didſt
" queſtion that Love which brought thee hi-
" ther? That thou waſt jealous of the Faith-
" fulneſs of thy Lord? That thou ſuſpecteddſt
" his Love, when thou ſhouldſt only have
" ſuſpected thyſelf? That ever thou didſt
" quench a Motion of his Spirit? And that
" thou ſhouldſt miſinterpret thoſe Providen-
" ces, and repine at thoſe Ways, which have
" ſuch an End? Now thou art ſufficiently con-
" vinced, that thy Redeemer was ſaving thee,
" as well when he croſſed thy Deſires, as
" when he granted them; when he broke
" thy Heart, as when he bound it up. No
" Thanks to thee, unworthy Self, for this re-
" ceived Crown; but to Jehovah, and the
" Lamb, be Glory for ever."

§ 12.

§ 12. But, oh! the full, the near, the ſweet Enjoyment, is that of *Love*. *God is Love, and he that dwelleth in Love dwelleth in God, and God in him* (n). *Now* the poor Soul complains, "Oh that I could love Chriſt "more!" *Then*, thou canſt not chuſe but love him. Now, thou knoweſt little of his Amiableneſs, and therefore loveſt little: Then, thine Eye will affect thy Heart, and the continual viewing of that perfect Beauty will keep thee in continual Tranſports of Love. *Chriſtians*, doth it not now ſtir up your Love, to remember all the Experiences of his Love? Doth not Kindneſs melt you, and the Sun-ſhine of divine Goodneſs warm your frozen Hearts? What will it do then, when you ſhall live in Love, and have All in him, who is All? Surely Love is both Work and Wages. What a high Favour, that God will give us Leave to love him! That he will be embraced by thoſe, who have embraced Luſt and Sin before him! But more than this, he returneth Love for Love; nay, a thouſand Times more. *Chriſtian*, thou wilt be then brim-full of Love; yet, love as much as thou canſt, thou ſhalt be ten thouſand Times more beloved. Were the Arms of the Son of God open upon the Croſs, and an open Paſſage made to his Heart by the Spear, and will not Arms and Heart be open to thee in Glory? Did he begin to love *before* thou lovedſt, and will he not continue *now?*

(n) 1 John iv. 16.

Did he love thee, an Enemy? thee, a Sinner? thee, who even loathedſt thyſelf? and own thee, when thou didſt diſclaim thyſelf? And will he not now immeaſurably love thee, a Son? thee, a perfect Saint? thee, who returneſt ſome Love for Love? He that in Love wept over the old *Jeruſalem* when near its Ruin, with what Love will he rejoice over the new *Jeruſalem* in her Glory? *Chriſtian*, believe this, and think on it: Thou ſhalt be eternally embraced in the Arms of that Love, which was from everlaſting, and will extend to everlaſting;—of that Love, which brought the Son of God's Love from Heaven to Earth, from Earth to the Croſs, from the Croſs to the Grave, from the Grave to Glory;——that Love, which was weary, hungry, tempted, ſcorned, ſcourged, buffeted, ſpit upon, crucified, pierced; which did faſt, pray, teach, heal, weep, ſweat, bleed, die;——that Love will eternally embrace thee. When perfect created Love, and moſt perfect uncreated Love, meet together, it will not be like *Joſeph* and his Brethren, who lay upon one another's Necks weeping; it will be loving and rejoicing, not loving and ſorrowing: Yet it will make *Satan*'s Court ring with the News, that *Joſeph*'s Brethren are come, that the Saints are arrived ſafe at the Boſom of Chriſt, out of the reach of Hell for ever: Nor is *there* any ſuch Love as *David*'s and *Jonathan*'s breathing out its laſt into ſad Lamentations for a forced Separation. Know this, *Believer*, to thy everlaſting

laſting Comfort, if thoſe Arms have once embraced thee, neither Sin, nor Hell, can get thee thence for ever. Thou haſt not to deal with an inconſtant Creature, but with him, *with whom is no Variableneſs, nor Shadow of Turning* (o). His Love to Thee will not be, as thine was on Earth to him, ſeldom, and cold, up and down. He that would not ceaſe, nor abate, his Love, for all thine Enmity, unkind Neglects, and churliſh Reſiſtances; can he ceaſe to love thee, when he hath made thee truly lovely? He that keepeth thee ſo conſtant in thy Love to him, that thou canſt challenge *Tribulation, Diſtreſs, Perſecution, Famine, Nakedneſs, Peril, or Sword, to ſeparate thy Love from Chriſt*, how much more will himſelf be conſtant (p)? Indeed thou mayſt be *perſuaded, that neither Death, nor Life, nor Angels, nor Principalities, nor Powers, nor Things preſent, nor Things to come, nor Height, nor Depth, nor any other Creature, ſhall be able to ſeparate us from the Love of God which is in Chriſt Jeſus our Lord* (q). And now are we not left in the Apoſtle's Admiration, *What ſhall we ſay to theſe Things* (r)? Infinite Love muſt needs be a Myſtery to a finite Capacity. No Wonder *Angels deſire to look into* this Myſtery (s). And if it be the Study of Saints here, *to know the Breadth, and Length, and Depth, and Height, of the Love of Chriſt, which paſſeth Knowledge* (t); the

(o) James i. 17. (p) Rom. viii. 35. (q) Rom. viii. 38, 39. (r) Rom. viii. 31. (s) 1 Pet. i. 12. (t) Epheſ. iii. 18, 19.

Saints everlaſting Reſt muſt conſiſt in the Enjoyment of God by *Love*.

§ 13. Nor hath *Joy* the leaſt Share in this Fruition. 'Tis *that*, which all the former lead to, and conclude in; even *the inconceivable Complacency which the Bleſſed feel in their ſeeing, knowing, loving, and being beloved of God.* This is the *white Stone, which no Man knoweth, ſaving he that receiveth it* (u). Surely this is the *Joy*, which *a Stranger doth not intermeddle with* (w). All Chriſt's Ways of Mercy tend to, and end in, the Saints Joys. He wept, ſorrowed, ſuffered, that they might rejoice; he ſendeth the Spirit to be their Comforter; he multiplies Promiſes; he diſcovers their future Happineſs, *that their Joy may be full* (x). He opens to them the Fountain of *living Waters*, that they may *thirſt no more*, and that it may *ſpring up in them to everlaſting Life* (y). He *chaſtens* them, *that he may give them Reſt* (z). He makes it their Duty to *rejoice in him alway, and again* commands them to *rejoice* (a). He never brings them into ſo low a Condition, wherein he does not leave them more Cauſe of Joy than Sorrow. And hath the Lord ſuch a Care of our Comfort here? Oh, what will that Joy be, where the Soul being perfectly prepared for Joy, and Joy prepared by Chriſt for the Soul, it ſhall be our Work, our Buſineſs, eternally to rejoice! It ſeems the Saints Joy ſhall be greater

(u) Rev. ii. 17. (w) Prov. xiv. 10. (x) John xvi. 24. (y) John iv. 10, 14. (z) Pſalm. xciv. 12, 13. (a) Phil. iv. 4.

greater than the Damned's Torment; for their Torment is the Torment of Creatures, *prepared for the Devil and his Angels* (b); but our Joy is *the Joy of our Lord* (c). *The* ſame *Glory which the Father gave the Son, the Son hath given them* (d), *to ſit with him in his Throne, even as he is ſet down with his Father in his Throne* (e). Thou, *poor Soul*, who prayeſt for Joy, waiteſt for Joy, complaineſt for Want of Joy, longeſt for Joy; *thou* then ſhalt have full Joy, as much as thou canſt hold, and more then ever thou thoughteſt on, or thy Heart deſired. In the mean Time walk carefully, watch conſtantly, and then let God meaſure out to thee thy Times and Degrees of Joy. It may be he keeps them till thou haſt more Need. Thou hadſt better loſe thy *Comfort* than thy *Safety*. If thou ſhouldſt die full of Fears and Sorrows, it will be but a Moment, and they are all gone, and concluded in Joy inconceivable. As *the Joy of the Hypocrite*, ſo the Fears of the Upright, are *but for a Moment*. *God's Anger endureth but a Moment; his Favour is Life; Weeping may endure for a Night, but Joy cometh in the Morning* (f). O bleſſed Morning! Poor, humble, drooping Soul, how would it fill thee with Joy now, if a Voice from Heaven ſhould tell thee of the Love of God, the Pardon of thy Sins, and aſſure thee of thy Part in theſe Joys? What then will thy Joy be, when thy actual Poſſeſſion ſhall convince

(b) Matt. xxv. 41. (c) Matt. xxv. 21. (d) John xvii. 22. (e) Rev. iii. 21. (f) Job xx. 5. Pſalm xxx. 5.

vince thee of thy Title, and thou ſhalt be in Heaven before thou art well aware?——

§ 14. AND it is not *thy Joy* only; it is a *mutual Joy*, as well as a *mutual Love*. Is there Joy in Heaven at thy Converſion, and will there be none at thy Glorification? Will not the Angels welcome thee thither, and congratulate thy ſafe Arrival?——Yea, it is the Joy of Jeſus Chriſt; for *now* he hath the End of his Undertaking, Labour, Suffering, Dying, when we have our Joys; *when he is glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe* (g); when *he ſees of the Travel of his Soul, and is ſatisfied* (h). This is Chriſt's Harveſt, when he ſhall reap the Fruit of his Labours; and it will not repent him concerning his Sufferings, but he will rejoice over his purchaſed Inheritance, and his People will rejoice in him.—— Yea, the Father himſelf puts on Joy too, in our Joy. As we *grieve his Spirit* (i), and *weary him with our Iniquities* (k); ſo is he rejoiced in our Good. O how quickly does he now ſpy a returning Prodigal, even *afar off?* How does he *run and meet him?* And with what *Compaſſion* does he *fall on his Neck, and kiſs him, and put on him the beſt Robe, and a Ring on his Hand, and Shoes on his Feet, and kills the fatted Calf to eat and be merry* (l). This is indeed a happy Meeting; but nothing to the Embracing and Joy of that laſt and great Meeting.—— Yea

(g) 2 Theſſ. i. 10. (h) Iſa. liii. 11. (i) Eph. iv. 30.
(k) Iſa. xliii. 24. (l) Luke xv. 20—23.

Yea more; as God doth mutually love and joy, ſo He makes this *His* Reſt, as it is *our* Reſt. What an eternal Sabbatiſm, when the Work of Redemption, Sanctification, Preſervation, Glorification, is all finiſhed, and perfected for ever! *The Lord thy God in the Midſt of thee is mighty, He will ſave, He will rejoice over thee with Joy, He will reſt in his Love, He will joy over thee with Singing* (m). Well may we *then* rejoice in our God with Joy, and reſt in our Love, and joy in him with Singing.

§ 15. Alas! my fearful Heart ſcarce dares proceed. Methinks I hear the Almighty's Voice ſaying to me, *Who is this that darkeneth Counſel by Words without Knowledge* (n)? But pardon thy Servant, O Lord. I have not pried into unrevealed Things. I bewail that my Apprehenſions are ſo dull, my Thoughts ſo mean, my Affections ſo ſtupid, and my Expreſſions ſo low, and unbeſeeming ſuch a Glory. *I have* only *heard by the Hearing of the Ear*; oh, let thy Servant *ſee thee*, and poſſeſs theſe Joys; and then ſhall I have more ſuitable Conceptions, and ſhall give thee fuller Glory; I ſhall *abhor my* preſent *Self*, and diſclaim and renounce all theſe Imperfections. *I have uttered that I underſtood not, Things too wonderful for me, which I knew not* (o). Yet *I believed, and therefore have I ſpoken* (p). What, Lord, canſt thou expect from Duſt but Levity? or from Cor-

(m) Zeph. iii. 17. (n) Job xxxviii. 2. (o) Job xlii. 3, 5, 6. (p) 2 Cor. iv. 13.

Corruption, but Defilement? Though the Weakneſs and Irreverence be the Fruit of my own Corruption, yet the Fire is from thine *Altar*, and the Work of thy commanding. I looked not into thy *Ark*, nor put forth my Hand unto it, without thee. *Waſh* away theſe Stains alſo *in the Blood of the Lamb*. Imperfect, or none, muſt be thy Service here. O take thy Son's Excuſe, *the Spirit is willing, but the Fleſh is weak* (q).

(q) Matt. xxvi. 41.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

The great Preparatives to the Saints Reſt.

§ 1. *The Happineſs of Chriſtians in having a Way open into Paradiſe. There are four Things which principally prepare the Way to enter into it*; § 2, 3. *particularly*, (1) *The glorious Appearing of Chriſt*; § 4. (2) *The general Reſurrection*; § 5—8. (3) *The laſt Judgment*; § 9, 10. *and* (4) *The Saints Coronation*; § 11. *Tranſition to the Subject of the next Chapter.*

§ 1. THE Paſſage of *Paradiſe* is not now ſo blocked up, as when the Law and Curſe reigned. Wherefore finding, *beloved Chriſtians, a new and living Way conſecrated for us, thro' the Vail, that is to ſay, the Fleſh of Chriſt, by which* we may with *Boldneſs enter into the Holieſt*, I ſhall *draw near with fuller Aſſurance* (a): And finding the *flaming Sword* removed, ſhall look again into the *Paradiſe* of our God: And becauſe I know that this is no *forbidden Fruit*, and withall that *it is good for Food and pleaſant to the* ſpiritual *Eyes, and a Tree to be deſired to make one* truly *wiſe* and happy; I ſhall, thro' the Aſſiſtance of the Spirit, *take and*

(a) Heb. x. 19, 20, 22.

and eat thereof myſelf, *and give* to you, according to my Power, that you may *eat*. The *Porch* of this *Temple*, is exceeding glorious, and *the Gate of it is called Beautiful*. Here are *four Things*, as the four Corners of this Porch. Here *is the moſt glorious Coming and Appearance of the Son of God*;—*that great Work of Jeſus Chriſt in raiſing our Bodies from the Duſt, and uniting them again to the Soul*;—*the publick and ſolemn Proceſs at their Judgment, where they ſhall firſt themſelves be acquitted and juſtified, and then with Chriſt judge the World*;—*together with their ſolemn Coronation, and receiving the Kingdom*.

§ 2. (1) *The moſt glorious Coming and Appearance of the Son of God* may well be reckoned into his People's Glory. For their Sake he came into the World, ſuffered, died, roſe, aſcended; and for their Sake it is that he will return. To this End *will Chriſt come again*, to *receive his People unto himſelf, that where he is, there they may be alſo* (b). The Bridegroom's Departure was not upon Divorce. He did not leave us with a Purpoſe to return no more. He hath left Pledges enough to aſſure us of the contrary. We have his Word, his many Promiſes, his Sacraments, which *ſhew forth his Death till he come* (c); and his Spirit, to direct, ſanctify, and comfort, till he return. We have frequent Tokens of Love from him, to ſhew us, that he forgets not his Promiſe, nor us. We daily

(b) John xiv. 3. (c) 1 Cor. xi. 26.

daily behold the Forerunners of his Coming, foretold by himſelf. We ſee *the Fig-Tree putteth forth Leaves*, and therefore *know that Summer is nigh* (d). Tho' the riotous World *ſay, My Lord delayeth his Coming* (e); yet let the Saints *lift up their Heads, for their Redemption draweth nigh* (f). Alas, *Fellow-Chriſtians*, what ſhould we do, if our Lord ſhould not return? What a Caſe are we here left in? What? leave us *in the Midſt of Wolves* (g), and *among Lions* (h), *a Generation of Vipers* (i), and here forget us? Did he buy us ſo dear, and then leave us ſinning, ſuffering, groaning, dying daily, and will he come no more to us? It cannot be.—— This is like our unkind Dealing with Chriſt, who, when we feel ourſelves warm in the World, care not for coming to him: But this is not like Chriſt's Dealing with us. He that would come to ſuffer, will ſurely come to triumph. He that would come to purchaſe, will ſurely come to poſſeſs. Where elſe were all our Hopes? What were become of our Faith, our Prayers, our Tears, and our Waiting? What were all the Patience of the Saints worth to them? Were we not left *of all Men moſt Miſerable* (k)? *Chriſtians*, hath Chriſt made us forſake all the World, and be forſaken of all the World? to hate all, and be hated of all? and all this for *him*, that we might have *him* inſtead

(d) Matt. xxiv. 30. (e) Matt. xxiv. 48. (f) Luke xxi. 28.
(g) Matt. x. 16. (h) Pſalm lvii. 4. (i) Matt. iii. 7.
(k) 1 Cor. xv. 19.

inſtead of all? And will he, think you, after all this, forget us, and forſake us himſelf? Far be ſuch a Thought from our Hearts!—But why ſtayed he not with his People while he was here? Why? Was not the Work on Earth done? Muſt he not take Poſſeſſion of Glory in our Behalf? Muſt he not intercede with the Father, plead his Sufferings, be filled with the Spirit to ſend forth, receive Authority, and ſubdue his Enemies? Our Abode here is ſhort. If he had ſtayed on Earth, what would it have been to enjoy him for a few Days, and then die? He hath more in Heaven to dwell among; even the Spirits of many Generations. He will have us live by Faith, and not by Sight.

§ 3. O *Fellow-Chriſtians*, what a Day will that be, when we, who have been kept Priſoners by Sin, by Sinners, by the Grave, ſhall be fetched out by the Lord himſelf? It will not be ſuch a Coming as his *firſt* was, in Poverty and Contempt, to be ſpit upon, and buffeted, and crucified again. He will not come, O careleſs World, to be ſlighted and neglected by you any more. Yet *that* Coming wanted not its Glory. If *the heavenly Hoſt*, for the Celebration of his Nativity, muſt *praiſe God* (l); with what Shoutings will Angels and Saints *at that Day* proclaim, *Glory to God, Peace and Good-will towards Men?* If a *Star* muſt lead Men from remote Parts of the World *to come to worſhip* a Child in a Manger (m); who

(l) Luke ii. 13, 14. (m) Matt. ii. 2.

how will the Glory of his next Appearing conſtrain all the World to acknowledge his Sovereignty? If, *riding on an Aſs*, he enter *Jeruſalem* with *Hoſannas* (n); with what Peace and Glory will he come toward the *new Jeruſalem?* If, when he was in *the Form of a Servant* (o), they cry out, *what Manner of Man is this, that even the Winds and the Sea obey him* (p); what will they ſay, when *they ſhall ſee him coming in his Glory*, and the Heavens and the Earth obey him? *Then ſhall all the Tribes of the Earth mourn* (q). To think and ſpeak of that Day with Horror, doth well become the impenitent Sinner, but ill the believing Saint. Shall the *Wicked* behold him, and cry, "Yonder "is he, whoſe Blood we neglected, whoſe "Grace we reſiſted, whoſe Counſels we refu-"ſed, whoſe Government we caſt off!" And ſhall not the *Saints*, with inconceivable Gladneſs, cry, "Yonder is he, whoſe Blood redee-"med us, whoſe Spirit cleanſed us, whoſe "Law did govern us, in whom we truſted, "and he hath not deceived our Truſt; for "whom we long waited, and now we ſee we "have not waited in vain! O curſed Corrup-"tion, that would have had us turn to the "World, and preſent Things, and ſay, *why "ſhould we wait for the Lord any longer* (r)? "Now we ſee, *Bleſſed are all they that wait "for him* (s)." And now, *Chriſtians*, ſhould

(n) Mat. xxi. 5—9. (o) Phil. ii. 7. (p) Mat. viii. 27.
(q) Mat. xxiv. 30. (r) 2 Kings vi. 33. (s) Iſa. xxx. 18.

we not put up that Petition heartily, *Thy Kingdom come? The Spirit and the Bride ſay, Come: And let him that heareth*, and readeth, *ſay, Come.* Our Lord himſelf *ſays, Surely I come quickly. Amen, even ſo, come, Lord Jeſus* (t).

§ 4. (2) ANOTHER Thing that leads to Paradiſe is, *that great Work of Jeſus Chriſt, in raiſing our Bodies from the Duſt, and uniting them again unto the Soul.* A wonderful Effect of infinite Power and Love! Yea, wonderful indeed, ſays Unbelief, if it be true. What, ſhall all theſe ſcattered Bones and Duſt become a Man?—Let me with Reverence plead for God, for that Power whereby I hope to ariſe. What beareth the maſſy Body of the Earth? What limits the vaſt Ocean of the Waters? Whence is that conſtant Ebbing and Flowing of the Tides? How many Times bigger than all the Earth is the Sun, that glorious Body of Light? Is it not as eaſy to raiſe the Dead, as to make Heaven and Earth, and all of Nothing? —Look not on the dead Bones, and Duſt, and Difficulty, but at the Promiſe. Contentedly commit theſe Carcaſſes to a Priſon, that ſhall not long contain them. Let us *lie down in Peace*, and take our Reſt; it will not be an everlaſting Night, nor endleſs Sleep. If *uncloathing* be the Thing thou feareſt; it is that thou mayſt have better *Cloathing* (u). If to be turned out of Doors be the Thing thou feareſt; remember, that when the *earthly Houſe of this Taber-*

(t) Rev. xxii. 17, 20. (u) 2 Cor. v. 4.

Tabernacle is diſſolved, thou haſt *a Building of God, an Houſe not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens* (w). Lay down chearfully this Lump of *Corruption*; thou ſhalt undoubtedly receive it again in *Incorruption*. Lay down freely this *terreſtrial*, this *natural Body*; thou ſhalt receive it again a *celeſtial*, a *ſpiritual Body*. Tho' thou lay it down with great *Diſhonour*; thou ſhalt receive it in *Glory*. Tho' thou art ſeparated from it thro' *Weakneſs*; it ſhall be raiſed again in mighty *Power*. *In a Moment, in the Twinkling of an Eye, at the laſt Trump; for the Trumpet ſhall ſound, and the Dead ſhall be raiſed incorruptible, and we ſhall be changed* (x). *The Dead in Chriſt ſhall riſe firſt. Then they which are alive and remain, ſhall be caught up together with them in the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air* (y). Triumph now, O *Chriſtian*, in theſe Promiſes; thou ſhalt ſhortly triumph in their Performance. *This is the Day which the Lord will make, we ſhall rejoice and be glad in it* (z). The Grave, that could not keep our Lord, cannot keep us. He aroſe for us, and by the ſame Power will cauſe us to ariſe. *For if we believe that Jeſus died, and roſe again, even ſo them alſo which ſleep in Jeſus, will God bring with him* (a). Let us never look at the Grave, but let us ſee the Reſurrection beyond it. Yea, let us *be ſtedfaſt, immove-*

(w) 2 Cor. v. 1.
(x) 1 Cor. xv. 42—44, 52.
(y) 1 Theſſ. iv. 16, 17.
(z) Pſal. cxviii. 24.
(a) 1 Theſſ. iv. 14.

able, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, forasmuch as we know our Labour is not in vain in the Lord (b).

§ 5. (3) PART of this Prologue to the Saints Rest, is *the publick and solemn Process at their Judgment, where they shall first themselves be acquitted and justified, and then with Christ judge the World.* Young and old, of all Estates and Nations, that ever were from the Creation to that Day, must here come, and receive their Doom. O terrible, O joyful Day! Terrible to those that have forgot the Coming of their Lord! Joyful to the Saints, whose Waiting and Hope was to see this Day! Then shall the World *behold the Goodness and Severity of God*; *on them which perish, Severity*; *but* to his chosen, *Goodness* (c). Every one must *give an Account of his Stewardship* (d). Every Talent of Time, Health, Wit, Mercies, Afflictions, Means, Warnings, must be reckoned for. The Sins of Youth, those which they had forgotten, and their secret Sins, shall all be laid open before Angels and Men. They shall see the Lord Jesus, whom they neglected, whose Word they disobeyed, whose Ministers they abused, whose Servants they hated, now sitting to judge them. Their own Consciences shall cry out against them, and call to their Remembrance all their Misdoings. Which Way will the wretched Sinner look? Who can conceive the terrible Thoughts of his Heart? Now the

(b) 1 Cor. xv. 58. (c) Rom. xi. 22. (d) Luke xvi. 2.

the World cannot help him; his old Companions cannot: the Saints neither can, nor will: Only the Lord Jeſus can; but, there is the Miſery, he will not. Time was, *Sinner*, when Chriſt would, and you would not; now, fain would you, and he will not. All in vain, to cry *to the Mountains and Rocks, fall on us, and hide us from the Face of him that ſitteth upon the Throne* (e); for thou haſt the Lord of Mountains and Rocks for thine Enemy, whoſe Voice they will obey, and not thine. *I charge thee therefore, before God, and the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who ſhall judge the Quick and the Dead, at his Appearing, and his Kingdom* (f), that thou ſet thyſelf ſeriouſly to ponder on theſe Things.

§ 6. But why trembleſt thou, *O humble gracious Soul?* He that would not loſe one *Noah* in a common Deluge, nor overlook one *Lot* in *Sodom*; nay, that could do Nothing till he went forth; will he forget thee at that Day? *The Lord knoweth how to deliver the Godly out of Temptation; and to reſerve the Unjuſt unto the Day of Judgment to be puniſhed* (g). He knoweth how to make the ſame Day the greateſt Terror to his Foes, and yet the greateſt Joy to his People. *There is no Condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus, who walk not after the Fleſh, but after the Spirit. Who ſhall lay any Thing to the Charge of God's Elect?* Shall the Law? *The Law of the Spirit of Life in Chriſt Jeſus, hath made them free from the Law of Sin*

(e) Rev. vi. 16. (f) 2 Tim. iv. 1. (g) 2 Pet. ii. 9.

and Death. Or ſhall Conſcience? *The Spirit itſelf beareth Witneſs with their Spirit, that they are the Children of God. It is God that juſtifieth; who is he that condemneth* (h)? If our Judge condemn us not, who ſhall? He that ſaid to the adulterous Woman, *hath no Man condemned thee? Neither do I* (i); will ſay to us more faithfully than *Peter* to him, *Though all Men deny thee*, or condemn thee, *I will not* (k). Having *confeſſed me before Men, thee will I confeſs alſo before my Father which is in Heaven* (l).

§ 7. WHAT inexpreſſible Joy, that our dear Lord, who loveth our Souls, and whom our Souls love, ſhall be our Judge! Will a Man fear to be judged by his deareſt Friend? or a Wife by her own Husband? *Chriſtian*, did Chriſt come down, and ſuffer, and weep, and bleed, and die for thee, and will he now condemn thee? Was he judged, condemned, and executed in thy ſtead, and now will he condemn thee himſelf? Hath he done moſt of the Work already, in redeeming, regenerating, ſanctifying, and preſerving thee, and will he now undo all again? Well then, let the Terror of that Day be never ſo great, ſurely our Lord can mean no ill to us in all. Let it make the Devils tremble, and the Wicked tremble; but it ſhall make us leap for Joy. It muſt needs affect us deeply with the Senſe of our Mercy and Happineſs, to ſee moſt of the World tremble with Terror, while we triumph

(h) Rom. viii. 1, 2, 16, 33, 34. (i) John viii. 10, 11.
(k) Mat. xxvi. 33, 35. (l) Mat. x. 32.

umph with Joy; to hear them doomed to everlaſting Flames, when we are proclaimed Heirs of the Kingdom; to ſee our Neighbours that lived in the ſame Towns, came to the ſame Congregation, dwelt in the ſame Houſes, and were eſteemed more honourable in the World than ourſelves, now by the Searcher of Hearts eternally ſeparated. This, with the great Magnificence and Dreadfulneſs of the Day, the *Apoſtle* pathetically expreſſes; *It is a righteous Thing with God, to recompenſe Tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you who are troubled, Reſt with us, when the Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from Heaven, with his mighty Angels, in flaming Fire, taking Vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; who ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting Deſtruction from the Preſence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power; when he ſhall come to be glorified in his Saints, and to be admired in all them that believe in that Day* (m).

§ 8. YET more, we ſhall be ſo far from the Dread of that Judgment, that ourſelves ſhall become the Judges. Chriſt will take his People, as it were, into Commiſſion with himſelf, and they ſhall ſit and approve his righteous Judgment. *Do ye not know that the Saints ſhall judge the World?* Nay, *know ye not that we ſhall judge Angels* (n)? Were it not for the Word of Chriſt that ſpeaks it, this Ad-

(m) 2 Theſſ. i. 6—10. (n) 1 Cor. vi. 2, 3.

vancement would ſeem incredible, and the Language arrogant. Even *Enoch, the ſeventh from Adam, propheſied of this, ſaying, Behold the Lord cometh with ten thouſands of his Saints, to execute Judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly Deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard Speeches which ungodly Sinners have ſpoken againſt him* (o). Thus ſhall the Saints be honoured, *and the Upright ſhall have Dominion in the Morning* (p). O that the careleſs World *were wiſe, that they underſtood this, that they would conſider their latter End* (q)! That they would be now of the ſame Mind as they will be, when they ſhall ſee *the Heavens paſs away with a great Noiſe, and the Elements melt with fervent Heat, the Earth alſo, and the Works that are therein, burnt up!* When all ſhall be on Fire about their Ears, and all earthly Glory conſumed. For *the Heavens and the Earth, which are now, are reſerved unto Fire againſt the Day of Judgment, and Perdition of ungodly Men. Seeing then that all theſe Things ſhall be diſſolved, what Manner of Perſons ought ye to be in all holy Converſation and Godlineſs, looking for and haſting unto the Coming of the Day of God, wherein the Heavens being on Fire ſhall be diſſolved, and the Elements ſhall melt with fervent Heat* (r)?

§ 9.

(o) Jude 14, 15.
(p) Pſalm xlix. 14.
(q) Deut. xxxii. 29.
(r) 2 Pet. iii. 7—12.

§ 9. (4) THE laſt Preparative to the Saints Reſt, is *their ſolemn Coronation, and receiving the Kingdom.* For as Chriſt, their Head, is anointed both King and Prieſt, ſo under him are his People *made unto God* both *Kings and Prieſts, to reign*, and to offer Praiſes for ever (s). The *Crown of Righteouſneſs, which was laid up for them, ſhall by the Lord the righteous Judge be given them at that Day* (t). They have been *faithful unto Death, and* therefore *he will give them a Crown of Life* (u). And according to the Improvement of *their Talents* here, ſo ſhall *their Rule* and Dignity be enlarged (w). They are not dignified with empty Titles, but real Dominion. Chriſt *will grant them to ſit with him in his Throne* (x); *and will give them Power over the Nations, even as he received of his Father*; *and he will give them the Morning-Star* (y). The Lord himſelf will give them Poſſeſſion with theſe applauding Expreſſions, *Well done, good and faithful Servant, thou haſt been faithful over a few Things, I will make thee Ruler over many Things*; *enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord* (z).

§ 10. AND with this ſolemn and bleſſed Proclamation ſhall he inthrone them; *Come, ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World* (a). Every Word full of Life and Joy.—— *Come*—— this is the holding forth of the golden Sceptre, to

(s) Rev. v. 10. (t) 2 Tim. iv. 8. (u) Rev. ii. 10.
(w) Mat. xxv. 21, 23. (x) Rev. iii. 21. (y) Rev. ii. 26--28.
(z) Mat. xxv. 23. (a) Mat. xxv. 34.

to warrant our Approach unto this Glory. Come now as near as you will; fear not the *Bethſhemites'* Judgment; for the *Enmity* is utterly *aboliſhed* (b). This is not ſuch a *Come* as we were wont to hear, *come, take up your Croſs, and follow me* (c). Though that was ſweet, yet this much more.——*Ye Bleſſed*—Bleſſed indeed, when that Mouth ſhall ſo pronounce us! For tho' the World hath accounted us accurſed, and we have been ready to account ourſelves ſo; yet certainly *thoſe that he bleſſeth, are bleſſed; and thoſe whom he curſeth, only are curſed, and his Bleſſing cannot be reverſed* (d).--*Of my Father*—Bleſſed in the Father's Love, as well as the Son's, for they *are one* (e). The Father hath teſtified his Love in their Election, Donation to Chriſt, ſending of Chriſt, and accepting his Ranſom; as the Son hath alſo teſtified his.—*Inherit*—No longer *Bondmen*, nor *Servants* only, nor *Children under Age*, who *differ not* in Poſſeſſion, but only in Title, *from Servants* (f). But now we are *Heirs of the Kingdom* (g), *and Joint-Heirs with Chriſt* (h).——*The Kingdom*—No leſs than the Kingdom? Indeed to be *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*, is our Lord's own proper Title: But to be *Kings, and reign with him* (i), is our's. The Enjoyment of this Kingdom, is as the Light of the Sun, each have the whole, and the reſt never the leſs.—*Prepared for you*—God

(b) Ephes. ii. 15.
(c) Mat. xvi. 24.
(d) Numb. xxii. 6. xxiii. 20.
(e) John x. 30.
(f) Gal. iv. 1—7.
(g) James ii. 5.
(h) Rom. viii. 17.
(i) Rev. xix. 16. xx. 6.

God is the *Alpha*, as well as the *Omega*, of our Bleſſedneſs. Eternal Love hath laid the Foundation. He prepared the Kingdom for us, and then prepared us for the Kingdom. This is the Preparation of his Counſel and Decree; for the Execution whereof Chriſt was yet to make a further Preparation.—*For you*—Not for Believers only in general, who without individual Perſons, are nobody; but for you perſonally.——*From the Foundation of the World*—Not only from the Promiſe after *Adam*'s Fall, but from Eternity.

§ 11. Thus we have ſeen the Chriſtian ſafely landed in Paradiſe, and conveyed honourably to his Reſt. Now let us a little further, in the next Chapter, view thoſe Manſions, conſider their Privileges, and ſee whether there be any Glory like unto this Glory.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

The Excellencies of the Saints Rest.

§ 1. *The Excellencies of the Saints Rest are enumerated.* § 2. (1) *It is the purchased Possession.* § 3, 4. (2) *A free Gift.* § 5. (3) *Peculiar to Saints.* § 6. (4) *An Association with Saints and Angels.* § 7. (5) *It derives its Joys immediately from God himself.* § 8. (6) *It will be seasonable.* § 9. (7) *Suitable.* § 10—12. (8) *Perfect, without Sin and Suffering.* § 13. (9) *And everlasting.* § 14. *The Chapter concludes with a serious Address to the Reader.*

§. 1. LET us draw a little nearer, and see what further Excellencies this Rest affordeth. The Lord hide us *in the Clifts of the Rock, and cover us with the Hands* of indulgent Grace, while we approach to this View! This Rest is excellent for being —a *purchased Possession*;—a *free Gift*;—*peculiar to Saints*;—an *Association with Saints and Angels*;—yet *deriving its Joys immediately from God*;—and because it will be a *seasonable*,—*suitable*,—*perfect*,—and *eternal Rest*.

§ 2 (1) IT is a most singular Honour of the Saints Rest, to be called *the purchased Possession*

Poſſeſſion (a). That is, the Fruit of the Blood of the Son of God; yea, the chief Fruit, the End and Perfection of all the Fruits and Efficacy of that Blood. Greater Love than this there is not, to lay down the Life of the Lover. And to have this our Redeemer ever before our Eyes, and the livelieſt Senſe and freſheſt Remembrance of that dying bleeding Love ſtill upon our Souls; How will it fill our Souls with perpetual Joy, to think that in the Streams of this Blood we have ſwam thro' the Violence of the World, the Snares of Satan, the Seducements of Fleſh, the Curſe of the Law, the Wrath of an offended God, the Accuſations of a guilty Conſcience, and the vexing Doubts and Fears of an unbelieving Heart, and are arrived ſafe at the Preſence of God! *Now* he cries to us, *Is it nothing to you, all ye that paſs by? Behold and ſee, if there be any Sorrow like unto my Sorrow* (b)! and we ſcarce regard the mournful Voice, yea ſcarce turn aſide to view the Wounds. But *then* our perfected Souls will feel, and flame in Love for Love. With what aſtoniſhing Apprehenſions will redeemed Saints everlaſtingly behold their bleſſed Redeemer, the Purchaſer, and the Price, together with the Poſſeſſion? Neither will the View of his Wounds of Love, renew our Wounds of Sorrow. He, whoſe firſt Words to a great Sinner, after his Reſurrection, were, *Woman, why weepeſt thou* (c), knows how to raiſe Love and Joy,

(a) Ephes. i. 14. (b) Lam. i. 12. (c) John xx. 15.

Joy, without any Cloud of Sorrow, or Storm of Tears. If any Thing we enjoy was purchaſed with the Life of our deareſt Friend, how highly ſhould we value it? If a dying Friend deliver us but a Token of his Love, how carefully do we preſerve it, and ſtill remember him when we behold it, as if his own Name were written on it? And will not then the Death and Blood of our Lord everlaſtingly ſweeten our poſſeſſed Glory? As we write down the Price our Goods coſt us; ſo on our Righteouſneſs and Glory, write down the Price, *the precious Blood of Chriſt*. His Sufferings were to ſatisfy the Juſtice that required Blood, and to bear what was due to Sinners, and ſo to reſtore them to the Life they loſt, and the Happineſs they fell from. The Work of Chriſt's Redemption ſo well pleaſed the Father, that he gave him Power to advance his Choſen, and give them the Glory, which was given to himſelf, and all this *according to his good Pleaſure, and the Counſel of his own Will* (d).

§ 3. (2) ANOTHER Pearl in the Saints Diadem is, that it is *a free Gift*. Theſe two, *purchaſed* and *free*, are the Chains of Gold which make up the Wreaths for the Tops of the Pillars in the Temple of God (e). It was dear to Chriſt, but free to us. When Chriſt was to buy, Silver and Gold were nothing worth; Prayers and Tears could not ſuffice, nor any Thing below his Blood; but our buying is receiving; we have it

(d) Ephes. i. 9, 11. (e) 1 Kings vii. 17.

it freely, *without Money, and without Price* (f). A thankful Acceptance of a free Acquittance, is no paying of the Debt. Here is all free; if the Father freely give the Son, and the Son freely pay the Debt; and if God freely accepts that Way of Payment, when he might have required it of the Principal; and if both Father and Son freely offer us the purchaſed Life on our cordial Acceptance, and if they freely ſend the Spirit to enable us to accept; what is here then that is not free? Oh the everlaſting Admiration that muſt needs ſurprize the Saints to think of this Freeneſs! "What did the Lord "ſee in me, that he ſhould judge me meet for "ſuch a State? That I, who was but a poor, "diſeaſed, deſpiſed Wretch, ſhould be clad in "the Brightneſs of this Glory! That I, a creep-"ing Worm, ſhould be advanced to this high "Dignity! That I, who was but lately groan-"ing, weeping, dying, ſhould now be as full "of Joy as my Heart can hold! yea, ſhould "be taken from the Grave, where I was rot-"ting, and from the Duſt and Darkneſs, where "I ſeemed forgotten, and be here ſet before "his Throne! That I ſhould be taken, with "*Mordecai*, from Captivity, and be ſet next "unto the King; and with *Daniel*, from the "Den, to be made Ruler of Princes and Pro-"vinces! Who can fathom unmeaſurable "Love?" If Worthineſs were our Condition for Admittance, we might ſit down and *weep*, with

(f) Iſa. lv. 1.

with St. *John*, *becauſe no Man was found worthy*. But *the Lion of the Tribe of Judah is worthy*, *and hath prevailed* (g); and by that Title muſt we hold the Inheritance. We ſhall *offer* there the *Offering* that *David* refuſed, even Praiſe for *that which coſt us nothing* (h). Here our Commiſſion runs, *freely ye have received*, *freely give* (i); but Chriſt has dearly bought, yet freely gives.

§ 4. If it were only for nothing, and without our Merit, the Wonder were great; but it is moreover againſt our Merit, and againſt our long endeavouring our own Ruin. What an aſtoniſhing Thought will it be, to think of the unmeaſurable Difference between our Deſervings and Receivings! Between the State we ſhould have been in, and the State we are in! To look down upon *Hell*, and ſee the vaſt Difference that Grace hath made between us and them! To ſee the Inheritance there, which we were *born* to, ſo different from that which we are *adopted* to! What Pangs of Love will it cauſe within us, to think, "*Yonder* was the "Place that Sin would have brought me to, "but *this* is it that Chriſt hath brought me to! "Yonder *Death* was *the Wages of* my *Sin*, but "this *eternal Life is the Gift of God*, *thro' Je-* "*ſus Chriſt my Lord* (k)! *Who made me to dif-* "*fer* (l)? Had I not now been in thoſe Flames, "if I had had my own Way, and been let a-

"lone

(g) Rev. v. 4, 5. (h) 2 Sam. xxiv. 24. (i) Mat. x. 8.
(k) Rom. vi. 23. (l) 1 Cor. iv. 7.

" lone to my own Will? Should I not have " *lingred in Sodom*, till the Flames had ſeized " on me, if God had not in Mercy *brought me* " *out* (m)?" Doubtleſs this will be our everlaſting Admiration, that ſo rich a Crown ſhould fit the Head of ſo vile a Sinner! That ſuch high Advancement, and ſuch long Unfruitfulneſs, and Unkindneſs, can be the State of the ſame Perſon! and that ſuch vile Rebellions can conclude in ſuch precious Joys! But no Thanks to us, nor to any of our Duties and Labours, much leſs to our Neglects and Lazineſs: We know to whom the Praiſe is due, and muſt be given for ever. Indeed to this very End it was, that infinite Wiſdom caſt the whole Deſign of Man's Salvation into this Mould of *Purchaſe* and *Freeneſs*, that the Love and Joy of Man might be perfected, and the Honour of Grace moſt highly advanced; that the Thought of Merit might neither cloud the one, nor obſtruct the other; and that on theſe two Hinges the Gate of Heaven might turn. So then let DESERVED be written on the Door of Hell, but on the Door of Heaven and Life, THE FREE GIFT.

§ 5. (3) THIS Reſt is *peculiar to Saints*, belongs to no other of all the Sons of Men. If all *Egypt* had been Light, the *Iſraelites* would not have had the leſs; but to enjoy that Light alone, while their Neighbours lived in thick Darkneſs, muſt make them more ſenſible of

(m) Gen. xix. 16.

their Priviledge. Diſtinguiſhing Mercy affects more than any Mercy. If *Pharoah* had paſſed as ſafely as *Iſrael*, the *Red-Sea* would have been leſs remembred. If the reſt of the World had not been drowned, and the reſt of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* not burned, the ſaving of *Noah* had been no Wonder, nor *Lot*'s Deliverance ſo much talked of. When one is enlightened, and another left in Darkneſs; one reformed, and another by his Luſt enſlaved; it makes the Saints cry out, *Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifeſt thyſelf unto us, and not unto the World* (n)? When the Prophet is ſent to one *Widow* only of all that *were in Iſrael*, and to *cleanſe* one *Naaman* of all the *Lepers* (o), the Mercy is more obſervable. That will ſurely be a Day of paſſionate Senſe on both Sides, when *there ſhall be two in one Bed*, and *two in the Field, the one taken, and the other left* (p). The Saints ſhall look down upon the burning Lake, and in the Senſe of their own Happineſs, and in the Approbation of God's juſt Proceedings, they ſhall rejoice and ſing, *Thou art righteous, O Lord, which waſt, art, and ſhalt be, becauſe thou haſt judged thus* (q).

§ 6. (4) But though this Reſt be proper to the Saints, yet it is common to all the Saints; for it is *an Aſſociation of bleſſed Spirits, both Saints and Angels*; a Corporation of perfected Saints, whereof Chriſt is the Head; the Commu-

(n) John xiv. 22. (o) Luke iv. 25—27.
(p) Luke xvii. 34, 36. (q) Rev. xvi. 5.

munion of Saints compleated. As we have been together in the Labour, Duty, Danger, and Diſtreſs; ſo ſhall we be in the great Recompence and Deliverance. As we have been ſcorned and deſpiſed; ſo ſhall we be owned and honoured together. We, who have gone thro' the Day of Sadneſs, ſhall enjoy together that Day of Gladneſs. Thoſe, who have been with us in Perſecution and Priſon, ſhall be with us alſo in that Palace of Conſolation. How oft have our Groans made, as it were, one Sound? our Tears, one Stream? and our Deſires, one Prayer? But now all our Praiſes ſhall make up one Melody; all our Churches, one Church; and all ourſelves, one Body; for we ſhall be *all one* in Chriſt, even *as he and the Father are one* (r). 'Tis true, we muſt be careful, not to look for that in the Saints, which is alone in Chriſt But if the Fore-Thought of *ſitting down with Abraham, and Iſaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven* (s), may be our lawful Joy; how much more the real Sight and actual Poſſeſſion? It cannot chuſe but be comfortable to think of that Day, when we ſhall join with *Moſes* in his *Song*, with *David* in his *Pſalms of Praiſe*, and with all the redeemed in *the Song of the Lamb* for ever (t); when we ſhall ſee *Enoch walking with God* (u); *Noah* enjoying the End of his Singularity; *Joſeph* of his Integrity; *Job* of his Patience; *Hezekiah* of his Uprightneſs; and all the Saints *the*

(r) John xvii. 21. (s) Mat. viii. 11.
(t) Rev. xv. 3. (u) Gen. v. 2.

End of their Faith (w). Not only our old Acquaintance, but all the Saints, of all Ages, whoſe Faces in the Fleſh we never ſaw, we ſhall there both know, and comfortably enjoy. Yea, Angels, as well as Saints, will be our bleſſed Acquaintance. Thoſe, who now are willingly our *miniſtring Spirits* (x), will willingly then be our Companions in Joy. They, who had ſuch *Joy in Heaven* for our Converſion (y), will gladly rejoice with us in our Glorification. Then we ſhall truly ſay, as *David, I am a Companion of all them that fear thee* (z); when we *are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the City of the living God, the heavenly Jeruſalem, and to an innumerable Company of Angels; to the general Aſſembly, and Church of the Firſt-born which are written in Heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect, and to Jeſus the Mediator of the new Covenant* (a). 'Tis a ſingular Excellence of heavenly Reſt, that we *are Fellow-Citizens with the Saints, and of the Houſhold of God* (b).

§ 7. (5) ANOTHER Property of our Reſt is, we ſhall *derive its Joys immediately from God.* Now we have nothing at all immediately, but at the ſecond, or third Hand, or how many, who knows? From the Earth, from Man, from Sun and Moon, from the Miniſtration of Angels, and from the Spirit, and Chriſt. Tho', in the Hand of Angels, the Stream ſavours not of

(w) 1 Pet. i. 9. (x) Heb. i. 14. (y) Luke xv. 7, 10.
(z) Ps. cxix. 63. (a) Heb. xii. 22—24. (b) Eph. ii. 19.

of the Imperfection of Sinners, yet it does of the Imperfection of Creatures; and as it comes from Man, it ſavours of both. How *quick and piercing is the Word* in itſelf (c)? Yet many Times it never enters, being managed by a feeble Arm. What Weight and Worth is there in every Paſſage of the bleſſed Goſpel? Enough, one would think, to enter and force the dulleſt Soul, and wholly poſſeſs its Thoughts and Affections; and yet how oft does it fall as Water upon a Stone? The Things of God, which we handle, are divine; but our Manner of handling is human. There is little we touch, but we leave the Print of our Fingers behind. If God ſpeaks the Word himſelf, it will be a piercing, melting Word indeed. The Chriſtian now knows by Experience, that his moſt immediate Joys are his ſweeteſt Joys; which have leaſt of Man, and are moſt directly from the Spirit. Chriſtians, who are much in ſecret Prayer and Contemplation, are Men of greateſt Life and Joy; becauſe they have all more immediately from God himſelf. Not that we ſhould caſt off Hearing, Reading, and Conference, or neglect any Ordinance of God: But to live above them, while we uſe them, is the Way of a Chriſtian. There is Joy in theſe remote Receivings; but the *Fulneſs of Joy is in God*'s immediate *Preſence* (d). We ſhall then have Light without a Candle, and perpetual Day without the Sun; for *the City has no need of the Sun, neither of the Moon to ſhine in it*,

(c) Heb. iv. 12. (d) Pſalm xvi. 11.

it, for the Glory of God lightens it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof: There ſhall be no Night there, and they need no Candle, neither Light; for the Lord God giveth them Light, and they ſhall reign for ever and ever (e). We ſhall then have enlightened Underſtandings without Scripture, and be governed without a written Law; for the Lord will perfect his Law in our Hearts, and we ſhall be all perfectly taught of God. We ſhall have Joy, which we drew not from the Promiſes, nor fetch'd home by Faith and Hope. We ſhall have Communion without Sacraments, without *this Fruit of the Vine, when Chriſt ſhall drink it new with us in his Father's Kingdom* (f), and refreſh us with the comforting Wine of immediate Enjoyment. To have Neceſſities, but no Supply, is the Caſe of them in Hell. To have Neceſſities ſupplied by Means of the Creatures, is the Caſe of us on Earth. To have Neceſſity ſupplied immediately from God, is the Caſe of the Saints in Heaven. To have no Neceſſity at all, is the Prerogative of God himſelf.

§ 8. (6) A FURTHER Excellence of this Reſt is, that it will be *ſeaſonable*.—He that expects *the Fruit of his Vineyard at the Seaſon* (g), and makes his People *like a Tree planted by the Rivers of Water, that bringeth forth his Fruit in his Seaſon* (h), will alſo give them the Crown in Seaſon. He that will have *a Word* of Joy *ſpoken in Seaſon to him that is weary* (i), will ſurely

(e) Rev. xxi. 23. xxii. 5.
(f) Mat. xxvi. 29.
(g) Mark xii. 2.
(h) Pſalm i. 3.
(i) Iſa. l. 4.

ſurely cauſe the Time of Joy to appear in the fitteſt Seaſon. They who *are not weary in well-doing, ſhall, if they faint not, reap in due Seaſon* (k). If God *giveth Rain*, even to his Enemies, *both the former and the latter in his Seaſon*, and *reſerveth the appointed Weeks of Harveſt, and covenants that there ſhall be Day and Night in their Seaſon* (l); then ſurely the glorious Harveſt of the Saints ſhall not miſs its Seaſon. Doubtleſs he that would not ſtay a Day longer than his Promiſe, but brought *Iſrael* out of *Egypt* on *the ſelf-ſame Day when the four hundred and thirty Years* were expired (m); neither will he fail of one Day or Hour of the fitteſt Seaſon for his People's Glory. When we have had in this World a long Night of Darkneſs, will not the Day-breaking, and the Riſing of the Sun of Righteouſneſs, be then ſeaſonable? When we have paſſed a long and tedious Journey, thro' no ſmall Dangers, is not Home then ſeaſonable? When we have had a long and perilous War, and received many a Wound, would not a Peace with Victory be ſeaſonable? Men live in a continual Wearineſs; eſpecially the Saints, who are moſt weary of that which the World cannot feel. Some weary of a blind Mind; ſome, of a hard Heart; ſome, of their Doubts and Fears; ſome, of the Want of ſpiritual Joys; and ſome, of the Senſe of God's Wrath. And when a poor Chriſtian hath deſired, and prayed, and waited for Deliverance many Years, is it not then ſeaſonable?

(k) Gal. vi. 9. (l) Jer. v. 24. xxxiii. 20. (m) Exod. xii. 40, 41.

ſonable? We grudge, that we do not find a *Canaan* in the Wilderneſs; or the Songs of *Sion* in a ſtrange Land; that we have not a Harbour in the main Ocean, nor our Reſt in the Heat of the Day, nor Heaven before we leave the Earth; and would not all this be very unſeaſonable?

§ 9. (7) As this Reſt will be ſeaſonable, ſo it will be *ſuitable*. The *new Nature of the Saints* doth ſuit their Spirits to this Reſt. Indeed their Holineſs is nothing elſe but a Spark taken from this Element, and by the Spirit of Chriſt kindled in their Hearts, the Flame whereof, mindful of its own divine Original, ever tends to the Place from whence it comes. Temporal Crowns and Kingdoms could not make a Reſt for Saints. As they *were not redeemed with* ſo low a Price (n), neither are they endued with ſo low a Nature. As God will have from them a ſpiritual Worſhip, ſuited to his own ſpiritual Being, he will provide them a ſpiritual Reſt, ſuitable to their ſpiritual Nature. The Knowledge of God and his Chriſt, a delightful Complacency in that mutual Love, an everlaſting Rejoicing in the Enjoyment of our God, with a perpetual Singing of his high Praiſes; this is a Heaven for a Saint. Then we ſhall live in our own Element. We are now as Fiſhes in a Veſſel of Water, only ſo much as will keep them alive; but what is that to the Ocean? We have a little Air let into us, to afford us Breathing; but what

(n) 1 Pet. i. 18.

what is that to the ſweet and freſh Gales upon Mount *Sion?* We have a Beam of the Sun to lighten our Darkneſs, and a warm Ray to keep us from freezing; but then we ſhall live in its Light, and be revived by its Heat for ever.—As the Natures of Saints are, ſuch are their Deſires; and it is the *Deſire of our renewed Nature* which this Reſt is ſuited to. Whilſt our Deſires remain corrupted and miſguided, it is a far greater Mercy to deny them, yea, to deſtroy them, than to ſatisfy them: But thoſe which are ſpiritual are of his own *planting*, and he will ſurely *water* them, and *give the Increaſe*. He quickened our Hunger and Thirſt for Righteouſneſs, that he might make us happy in a full Satisfaction. *Chriſtian*, this is a Reſt after thine own Heart; it contains all that thy Heart can wiſh; that which thou longeſt, prayeſt, laboureſt for, *there* thou ſhalt find it all. Thou hadſt rather have God in Chriſt, than all the World: There thou ſhalt have him. What wouldſt thou not give for Aſſurance of his Love? There thou ſhalt have Aſſurance without Suſpicion. Deſire what thou canſt, and aſk what thou wilt, as a Chriſtian, and it ſhall be given thee, not only to half of the Kingdom, but to the Enjoyment both of Kingdom and King. This is a Life of Deſire and Prayer, but that is a Life of Satisfaction and Enjoyment.—This Reſt is very ſuitable to the *Saints' Neceſſities* alſo, as well as to their Natures and Deſires. It contains whatſoever they truly wanted; not ſupplying them with

with groſs created Comforts, which, like *Saul*'s Armour on *David*, are more Burthen than Benefit. It was Chriſt and perfect Holineſs which they moſt needed, and with theſe ſhall they be ſupplied.

§ 10. (8) STILL more, this Reſt will be abſolutely *perfect*. We ſhall then have Joy without Sorrow, and Reſt without Wearineſs. *There* is no Mixture of Corruption with our Graces, nor of Suffering with our Comfort. There are none of thoſe Waves in that Harbour, which now ſo toſs us up and down. To-day we are well, To-morrow ſick; To-day in Eſteem, To-morrow in Diſgrace; To-day we have Friends, To-morrow none; nay, we have Wine and Vinegar in the ſame Cup. If *Revelations* raiſe us *to the third Heaven*, *the Meſſenger of Satan* muſt preſently *buffet* us, and *the Thorn in the Fleſh* fetch us down (o). But there is none of this Inconſtancy in Heaven. If *perfect Love caſteth out Fear* (p), then perfect Joy muſt needs caſt out Sorrow, and perfect Happineſs exclude all the Reliques of Miſery. We ſhall there reſt from all the Evil of *Sin* and of *Suffering*.

§ 11. HEAVEN excludes nothing more directly than *Sin*, whether of Nature, or of Converſation. *There ſhall in no wiſe enter any Thing that defileth, neither whatſoever worketh Abomination, or maketh a Lye* (q). What need Chriſt at all to have died, if Heaven could have contained imperfect Souls? *For this Purpoſe the Son*

(o) 2 Cor. xii. 2, 7. (p) 1 John iv. 18. (q) Rev. xxi. 27.

Son of God was manifeſted, that he might deſtroy the Works of the Devil (r). His Blood and Spirit have not done all this, to leave us after all defiled. *What Communion hath Light with Darkneſs? and what Concord hath Chriſt with Belial* (s)? *Chriſtian*, if thou be once in Heaven, thou ſhalt ſin no more. Is not this glad News to thee, who haſt prayed, and watched againſt it ſo long? I know, if it were offered to thy Choice, thou wouldſt rather chuſe to be freed from Sin, than have all the World. Thou ſhalt have thy Deſire.—That hard Heart, thoſe vile Thoughts, which accompanied thee to every Duty, ſhall now be left behind for ever.—Thy Underſtanding ſhall never more be troubled with Darkneſs. All dark Scriptures ſhall be made plain; all ſeeming Contradictions reconciled. The pooreſt Chriſtian is preſently a more perfect Divine there, than any here. O that happy Day, when Error ſhall vaniſh for ever! When our Underſtanding ſhall be filled with God himſelf, whoſe Light will leave no Darkneſs in us! His Face ſhall be the Scripture, where we ſhall read the Truth. Many a godly Man hath here, in his miſtaken Zeal, been a Means to deceive and pervert his Brethren; and when he ſees his own Error, cannot again tell how to undeceive them. But there we ſhall conſpire in one Truth, as being one in him who is the Truth.—We ſhall alſo reſt from all the Sin of our Will, Affection, and Converſation. We ſhall

(r) 1 John iii. 8. (s) 2 Cor. vi. 14, 15.

ſhall no more retain this rebelling Principle, which is ſtill drawing us from God: No more be oppreſſed with the Power of our Corruptions, nor vexed with their Preſence: No Pride, Paſſion, Slothfulneſs, Inſenſibility, ſhall enter with us; no Strangeneſs to God, and the Things of God; no Coldneſs of Affections, nor Imperfection in our Love; no uneven Walking, nor grieving of the Spirit; no ſcandalous Action, nor unholy Converſation; we ſhall reſt from all theſe for ever. Then ſhall our Will correſpond to the divine Will, as Face anſwers to Face in a Glaſs, and from which, as our Law and Rule, we ſhall never ſwerve. *For he that is entered into his Reſt, he alſo hath ceaſed from his own Works, as God did from his* (t).

§ 12. Our *Sufferings* were but the Conſequences of our ſinning, and in Heaven they both ſhall ceaſe together.—We ſhall reſt from all our *Doubts of God's Love*. It ſhall no more be ſaid, that "Doubts are like the Thiſtle, a "bad Weed, but growing in good Ground "(u). They ſhall now be weeded out; and trouble the gracious Soul no more. We ſhall hear that Kind of Language no more, "What "ſhall I do to know my State? How ſhall I "know that God is my Father? that my "Heart is upright? that Converſion is true? "that Faith is ſincere? I am afraid my Sins "are unpardoned; that all I do is Hypocriſy; "that God will reject me; that he does not "hear

(t) Heb. iv. 10. (u) Dr. *John Preſton*.

" hear my Prayers." All this is there turned into Praiſe.—We ſhall reſt from all *Senſe of God's Diſpleaſure*. Hell ſhall not be mixed with Heaven. At Times the gracious Soul *remembred God, and was troubled; complained, and was overwhelmed, and refuſed to be comforted*; divine *Wrath lay hard upon him, and God afflicted him with all his Waves* (w). But that bleſſed Day ſhall convince us, that though God *hid his Face from us for a Moment*, yet *with everlaſting Kindneſs will he have Mercy on us* (x). —We ſhall reſt from all *the Temptations of Satan*. What a Grief is it to a Chriſtian, tho' he yield not to the Temptation, yet to be ſolicited to deny his Lord? What a Torment, to have ſuch horrid Motions made to his Soul? ſuch blaſphemous Ideas preſented to his Imagination? Sometimes cruel Thoughts of God, undervaluing Thoughts of Chriſt, unbelieving Thoughts of Scripture, or injurious Thoughts of Providence? To be tempted ſometimes to turn to preſent Things, to play with the Baits of Sin, and venture on the Delights of Fleſh, and ſometimes to Atheiſm itſelf? Eſpecially, when we know the Treachery of our own Hearts, ready, as Tinder, to take Fire, as ſoon as one of theſe Sparks ſhall fall upon them? Satan hath Power here to tempt us *in the Wilderneſs*, but he entereth not *the Holy City*; he may *ſet us on a Pinacle of the Temple* in the *earthly Jeruſalem*, but the *new Jeruſalem* he may

(w) Pſalm lxxvii. 2, 3. lxxxviii. 7. (x) Iſa. liv. 8.

may not approach; he may *take us up into an exceeding high Mountain*, but the *Mount Sion* he cannot aſcend; and if he could, *all the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them* (y), would be a deſpiſed Bait to a Soul poſſeſſed of the Kingdom of our Lord. No, 'tis in vain for Satan to offer a Temptation more.—All our *Temptations from the World and the Fleſh* ſhall alſo ceaſe. O the hourly Dangers that we here walk in! Every Senſe, and Member, is a Snare; every Creature, every Mercy, and every Duty, is a Snare to us. We can ſcarce open our Eyes, but we are in Danger of envying thoſe above us, or deſpiſing thoſe below us; of coveting the Honours and Riches of ſome, or beholding the Rags and Beggary of others with Pride and Unmercifulneſs. If we ſee Beauty, 'tis a Bait to Luſt; if Deformity, to Loathing and Diſdain: How ſoon do ſlanderous Reports, vain Jeſts, and wanton Speeches creep into the Heart! How conſtant and ſtrong a Watch does our Appetite require! Have we Comelineſs and Beauty? What Fuel for Pride! Are we deformed? What an Occaſion of repining! Have we Strength of Reaſon, and Gifts of Learning? O how prone to be puft up, hunt after Applauſe, and deſpiſe our Brethren! Are we unlearned? How apt then to deſpiſe what we have not! Are we in Places of Authority? How ſtrong is the Temptation to abuſe our Truſt, make our Will our Law, and cut out all

(y) Mat. iv. 1, 5, 8.

all the Enjoyments of others by the Rules and Model of our own Intereſt and Policy! Are we Inferiors? How prone to grudge at others Pre-eminence, and bring their Actions to the Bar of our Judgment! Are we rich, and not too much exalted? Are we poor, and not diſcontented? Are we not lazy in our Duties, or make a Chriſt of them? Not that God hath made all theſe Things our Snares; but thro' our own Corruption they become ſo to us. Ourſelves are the greateſt Snare to Ourſelves. This is our Comfort, our Reſt will free us from all theſe. As Satan hath no Entrance there, ſo neither any Thing to ſerve his Malice; but all Things there ſhall join with us in the high Praiſes of our great Deliverer.——As we reſt from the Temptations, we ſhall likewiſe from *the Abuſes and Perſecutions of the World.* The Prayers of *the Souls under the Altar* will then be anſwered, and God will *avenge their Blood on them that dwell on the Earth* (z). *This* is the Time for crowning with Thorns; *that* for crowning with Glory. *Now, all that will live Godly in Chriſt Jeſus, ſhall ſuffer Perſecution* (a): *then,* they *that ſuffered with him,* ſhall *be glorified with him* (b). *Now,* we muſt *be hated of all Men for Chriſt's Name Sake* (c): *Then,* Chriſt will *be admired in his Saints* that were thus hated (d). *We are* here *made a Spectacle unto the World, and to Angels, and to Men; as the Filth of*

(z) Rev. vi. 9, 10.
(a) 2 Tim. iii. 12.
(b) Rom. viii. 17.
(c) Mat. x. 22.
(d) 2 Theſs. i. 10.

of the World, and the Off-ſcouring of all Things (e). *Men ſeparate us from their Company, and reproach us, and caſt out our Names as evil* (f); But we ſhall then be as much gazed at for our Glory; and they will be ſhut out of the Church of the Saints, and ſeparated from us, whether they will or no. We can now ſcarce pray in our Families, or ſing Praiſes to God, but our Voice is a Vexation to them: How muſt it torment them then, to ſee us praiſing and rejoicing, while they are howling and lamenting! You, *Brethren*, who can now attempt no Work of God without loſing the Love of the World, conſider, you ſhall have none in Heaven but will further your Work, and join Heart and Voice with you in your everlaſting Joy and Praiſe. Till then, *poſſeſs ye your Souls in Patience* (g). Bind all Reproaches as a Crown to your Heads. Eſteem them greater Riches than the World's Treaſures. *It is a righteous Thing with God to recompence Tribulation to them that trouble you; and to you, who are troubled, Reſt with* Chriſt (h).——We ſhall then reſt from all *our ſad Diviſions, and unchriſtian Quarrels with one another.* How lovingly do Thouſands live together in Heaven, who lived at Variance upon Earth! There is no Contention, becauſe none of this Pride, Ignorance, or other Corruption. There is no plotting to ſtrengthen our Party, nor

(e) 1 Cor. iv. 9, 13. (f) Luke vi. 22.
(g) Luke xxi. 19. (h) 2 Theſs. i. 6, 7.

nor deep deſigning againſt our Brethren. If there be Sorrow or Shame in Heaven, we ſhall then be both ſorry and aſhamed, to remember all this Carriage on Earth; as *Joſeph*'s Brethren were to behold him, when they remembred their former unkind Uſage. Is it not enough that all the World is againſt us, but we muſt alſo be againſt one another? O happy Days of Perſecution, which drove us together in Love, whom the Sun-ſhine of Liberty and Proſperity crumbles into Duſt by our Contentions! O happy Day of the Saints Reſt in Glory, when, as there is one God, one Chriſt, one Spirit, ſo we ſhall have one Heart, one Church, one Employment for ever!—We ſhall then reſt from *our Participation of our Brethren's Sufferings.* The Church on Earth is a mere Hoſpital; ſome groaning under a dark Underſtanding, ſome under an inſenſible Heart, ſome languiſhing under unfruitful Weakneſs, and ſome bleeding for Miſcarriages and Wilfulneſs, ſome crying-out of their Poverty, ſome groaning under Pains and Infirmities, and ſome bewailing a whole Catalogue of Calamities. But a far greater Grief it is, to ſee our deareſt and moſt intimate Friends turned aſide from the Truth of Chriſt, continuing their Neglect of Chriſt and their Souls, and nothing will awaken them out of their Security: To look on an ungodly Father or Mother, Brother or Siſter, Wife or Husband, Child or Friend, and think how certainly they ſhall be in Hell for ever, if they die

in their preſent unregenerate State: To think of the *Goſpel* departing, the Glory taken from our *Iſrael*, poor Souls left willingly dark and deſtitute, and blowing out the Light that ſhould guide them to Salvation! Our Day of Reſt will free us from all this, *and the Days of mourning ſhall be ended*; then *thy People*, O Lord, *ſhall be all righteous*; *they ſhall inherit the Land for ever*, *the Branch of thy planting*, *the Work of thy Hands*, *that thou mayſt be glorified* (i).—— Then we ſhall reſt from all *our own perſonal Sufferings*. This may ſeem a ſmall Thing to thoſe that live in Eaſe and Proſperity; but to the daily-afflicted Soul it makes the Thoughts of Heaven delightful. O the dying Life we now live! as full of Sufferings as of Days and Hours! Our Redeemer leaves this Meaſure of Miſery upon us, to make us know for what we are beholden, to mind us of what we ſhould elſe forget, to be ſerviceable to his wiſe and gracious Deſigns, and advantageous to our full and final Recovery. Grief enters at every Senſe, ſeizes every Part and Power of Fleſh and Spirit. What noble Part is there, that ſuffereth its Pain or Ruin alone? But Sin and Fleſh, Duſt and Pain, will all be left behind together. O the bleſſed Tranquillity of that Region, where there is nothing but ſweet continued Peace! O healthful Place, where none are ſick! O fortunate Land, where all are Kings! O holy Aſſembly, where all are Prieſts! How free a State, where none

(i) Iſaiah lx. 20, 21.

none are Servants, but to their ſupreme Monarch! The poor Man ſhall no more be tired with his Labours: *No more Hunger or Thirſt*, Cold or Nakedneſs: No pinching Froſts or ſcorching Heats. Our Faces ſhall no more be pale or ſad: No more Breaches in Friendſhip, nor parting of Friends aſunder; no more Trouble accompanying our Relations, nor Voice of Lamentation heard in our Dwellings! *God ſhall wipe away all Tears from our Eyes* (k). O my Soul, bear with the Infirmities of thine earthly Tabernacle; it will be thus but a little while; *the Sound of* thy Redeemer's *Feet is even at the Door*.——We ſhall alſo reſt from all *the Toil of Duties*. The conſcientious Magiſtrate, Parent, and Miniſter, cries out "O the Burthen "that lieth upon me!" Every Relation, State, Age, hath Variety of Duties; ſo that every conſcientious Chriſtian cries out "O the Burthen! "O my Weakneſs that makes it burthenſome!" But our remaining Reſt will eaſe us of the Burthen.——Once more, we ſhall reſt from all *thoſe troubleſome Affections which neceſſarily accompany our Abſence from God*. The Trouble that is mixt in our Deſires and Hopes, our Longings and Waitings, ſhall then ceaſe. We ſhall no more look into our Cabinet, and miſs our Treaſure; into our Hearts, and miſs our Chriſt; no more ſeek him from Ordinance to Ordinance, but all be concluded in a moſt full and bleſſed Enjoyment.

(k) Rev. vii, 16 17.

§ 13. (9) The laſt Jewel of our Crown is, that it will be an *everlaſting* Reſt. Without this all were comparitively Nothing. The very Thought of leaving it, would embitter all our Joys. It would be a Hell in Heaven, to think of once loſing Heaven: As it would be a Kind of Heaven to the Damned, had they but Hopes of once eſcaping. Mortality is the Diſgrace of all ſublunary Delights. How it ſpoils our Pleaſure, to ſee it dying in our Hands! But O bleſſed Eternity! where our Lives are perplexed with no ſuch Thoughts, nor our Joys interrupted with any ſuch Fears! where we ſhall be *Pillars in the Temple of our God, and go no more out* (l). While we were *Servants*, we held by Leaſe, and that but for the Term of a tranſitory Life; *but the Son abideth in the Houſe for ever* (m). "O my Soul, let go thy "Dreams of preſent Pleaſure, and looſe thy "Hold of Earth and Fleſh. Study frequent-"ly, ſtudy thoroughly, this one Word, *Eter-"nity*. What! Live, and never die! Rejoice, "and ever rejoice!" O happy Souls in Hell, ſhould you but eſcape, after Millions of Ages! O miſerable Saints in Heaven, ſhould you be diſpoſſeſſed, after the Age of a Million of Worlds! This Word, *everlaſting*, contains the Perfection of their Torment, and our Glory. O that the Sinner would ſtudy this Word, methinks it would ſtartle him out of his dead Sleep! O that the gracious Soul would ſtudy it,

(l) Rev. iii. 12. (m) John viii. 35.

it, methinks it ſhould revive him in his deepeſt Agony! "And muſt I, Lord, thus live for "ever? Then will I alſo love for ever. Muſt "my Joys be immortal? And ſhall not my "Thanks be alſo immortal? Surely, if I ſhall "never loſe my Glory, I will never ceaſe my "Praiſes. If thou wilt both perfect, and per-"petuate me and my Glory; as I ſhall be thine, "and not my own, ſo ſhall my Glory be thy "Glory. And as thy Glory was thy ultimate "End in my Glory; ſo ſhall it alſo be my End, "when thou haſt crowned me with that Glo-"ry which hath no End. *Unto the King eter-"nal, immortal, inviſible, the only wiſe God, "be Honour and Glory, for ever and ever. "Amen* (n)."

§ 14. THUS I have endeavoured to ſhew you a Glimpſe of approaching Glory. But how ſhort are my Expreſſions of its Excellency! *Reader*, if thou be an humble ſincere Believer, and waiteſt with Longing and Labouring for this Reſt, thou wilt ſhortly ſee, and feel, the Truth of all this. Thou wilt then have ſo high an Apprehenſion of this bleſſed State, as will make thee pity the Ignorance and Diſtance of Mortals, and will tell thee, all that is here ſaid falls ſhort of the whole Truth a Thouſand-fold. In the mean Time, let this much kindle thy Deſires and quicken thy Endeavours: Up and be doing, run, and ſtrive, and fight, and hold on; for thou haſt a certain, glorious Prize before

(n) 1 Tim. i. 17.

thee. God will not mock thee; do not mock thyſelf, nor betray thy Soul by delaying, and all is thine own. What Kind of Men, doſt thou think, would Chriſtians be in their Lives and Duties, if they had ſtill this Glory freſh in their Thoughts? What Frame would their Spirits be in, if their Thoughts of Heaven were lively and believing? Would their Hearts be ſo heavy? their Countenances be ſo ſad? or would they have need to take up their Comforts from below? Would they be ſo loth to ſuffer; ſo afraid to die; or would they not think every Day a Year till they enjoy it? May the Lord heal our carnal Hearts, leſt we *enter not into this Reſt, becauſe of Unbelief* (o)!

(o) Heb. iii. 19.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

The Character of the Perſons, for whom this Reſt is deſigned.

§ 1. *'Tis wonderful that ſuch Reſt ſhould be deſigned for Mortals.* § 2. *The People of God, who ſhall enjoy this Reſt, are* (1) *choſen from Eternity.* § 3. (2) *Given to Chriſt.* § 4. (3) *Born again.* § 5—8. (4) *Deeply convinced of the Evil of Sin, their Miſery by Sin, the Vanity of the Creature, and the All-ſufficiency of Chriſt.* § 9. (5) *Their Will is proportionably changed.* § 10. (6) *They engage in Covenant with Chriſt.* § 11. (7) *They perſevere in their Engagements.* § 12. *The Reader invited to examine himſelf by theſe Characteriſticks of God's People.* § 13. *Further Teſtimony from Scripture that this Reſt ſhall be enjoyed by the People of God.* § 14. *Alſo that none but they ſhall enjoy it.* § 15, 16. *And that it remains for them, and is not to be enjoyed till they come to another World.* § 17. *The Chapter concludes with ſhewing, that their Souls ſhall enjoy this Reſt, while ſeparated from their Bodies.*

§ 1. WHILE I was in the Mount, deſcribing the Excellencies of the *Saints Reſt*, I felt it was good being there, and

therefore tarried the longer; and was there not an extreme Diſproportion between my Conceptions and the Subject, much longer had I been. Can a Proſpect of that happy Land be tedious? Having read of ſuch a high and unſpeakable Glory, a Stranger would wonder, for what rare Creature this mighty Preparation ſhould be made, and expect ſome illuſtrious Sun ſhould break forth. But behold! only a Shell full of Duſt, animated with an inviſible, rational Soul, and that rectified with as unſeen a reſtored Power of Grace; and this is the Creature that muſt poſſeſs ſuch Glory. You would think it muſt needs be ſome deſerving Piece, or one that brings a valuable Price: But behold! One that hath Nothing, and can deſerve Nothing; yea, that deſerves the contrary, and would, if he might proceed in that deſerving; but being apprehended by Love, he is brought to him that is *All* (a); and moſt affectionately receiving him, and reſting on him, he doth, in and thro' him, receive all this. More particularly, the Perſons for whom this Reſt is deſigned, are—*choſen of God from Eternity*;—*given to Chriſt, as their Redeemer*;—*born again*;—*deeply convinced of the Evil and Miſery of a ſinful State, the Vanity of the Creature, and the All-ſufficiency of Chriſt*;—*their Will is renewed*;—*they engage themſelves to Chriſt in Covenant*;—and *they perſevere in their Engagements to the End.*

§ 2.

(a) Col. iii. 11.

§ 2. (1) THE Perſons for whom this Reſt is deſigned, whom the Text calls *the People of God*, are *the Choſen of God from Eternity* (b). That they are but a ſmall Part of Mankind, is too apparent in Scripture and Experience. They are the *little Flock*, to whom *it is their Father's good Pleaſure to give the Kingdom* (c). Fewer they are than the World imagines; yet not ſo few, as ſome drooping Spirits think, who are ſuſpicious that God is unwilling to be their God, when they know themſelves willing to be his People.

§ 3. (2) THESE Perſons are *given of God to his Son, to be by him redeemed from their loſt State, and advanced to this Glory*. God hath given all things to his Son, but not as he hath given his Choſen to him. *God hath given him Power over all Fleſh, that he ſhould give eternal Life to as many as the Father hath given him* (d). The Difference is clearly expreſſed by the *Apoſtle*; *he hath put all Things under his Feet, and gave him to be the Head over all Things to the Church* (e). And tho' Chriſt is, in ſome Senſe, *a Ranſom for all* (f), yet not in that ſpecial Manner as for his People.

§ 4. (3) ONE great Qualification of theſe Perſons is, that they are *born again* (g). To be the People of God without Regeneration, is as impoſſible as to be the Children of Men without

(b) Ephes. i. 4, 5.
(c) Luke xii. 32.
(d) John xvii. 2.
(e) Ephes. i. 22.
(f) 1 Tim. ii. 6.
(g) John iii. 3.

out Generation. Seeing we are born God's Enemies, we muſt be new-born his Sons, or elſe remain Enemies ſtill. The greateſt Reformation of Life that can be attained to, without this new Life wrought in the Soul, may procure our farther Deluſion, but never our Salvation.

§ 5. (4) THIS new Life in the People of God diſcovers itſelf by *Conviction*, or *a deep Senſe of divine Things*. As for Inſtance—They are convinced of *the Evil of Sin*. The Sinner is made to know and feel, that the Sin, which was his Delight, is a more loathſome Thing than a Toad or Serpent, and a greater Evil than Plague or Famine; being a Breach of the righteous Law of the moſt high God, diſhonourable to him, and deſtructive to the Sinner. Now the Sinner no more hears the Reproofs of Sin, as Words of Courſe; but the Mention of his Sin ſpeaks to his very Heart, and yet he is contented you ſhould ſhew him the worſt. He was wont to marvel, what made Men keep ſuch a Stir againſt Sin; what Harm it was for a Man to take a little forbidden Pleaſure; he ſaw no ſuch Heinouſneſs in it, that Chriſt muſt needs die for it, and a Chriſtleſs World be eternally tormented in Hell. Now the Caſe is altered; God hath opened his Eyes to ſee the inexpreſſible Vileneſs of Sin.

§ 6. THEY are convinced of *their own Miſery by Reaſon of Sin*. They who before read the Threats of God's Law, as Men do the Story of

of foreign Wars, now find it their own Story, and perceive they read their own Doom; as if they found their Names written in the Curſe, or heard the Law ſay, as *Nathan*, *Thou art the Man* (h). The Wrath of God ſeemed to him before, but as a Storm to a Man in a dry Houſe, or as the Pains of the Sick to the healthful Standerby; but now he finds the Diſeaſe is his own, and feels himſelf a condemned Man, that he is dead and damned in Point of Law, and that nothing was wanting but mere Execution to make him abſolutely and irrecoverably miſerable. This is a Work of the Spirit, wrought in ſome Meaſure in all the Regenerate. How ſhould he come to Chriſt for Pardon, that did not firſt find himſelf guilty, and condemned? or for Life, that never found himſelf ſpiritually dead? *The Whole need not a Phyſician, but they that are ſick* (i). The Diſcovery of the Remedy, as ſoon as the Miſery, muſt needs prevent a great Part of the Trouble. And perhaps the joyful Apprehenſions of Mercy may make the Senſe of Miſery ſooner forgotten.

§ 7. THEY are alſo convinced of the *Creature's Vanity and Inſufficiency*. Every Man is naturally an Idolater. Our Hearts turned from God in our firſt Fall, and ever ſince the Creature hath been our God. This is the grand Sin of Nature. Every unregenerate Man aſcribes to the Creature divine Prerogatives, and allows it the higheſt Room in his Soul; or if he

(h) 2 Sam. xii. 7. (i) Luke v. 31.

he is convinced of Miſery, he flies to it as his Saviour. Indeed, God and his Chriſt ſhall be called Lord and Saviour; but the real Expectation is from the Creature, and the Work of God is laid upon it. Pleaſure, Profit, and Honour, are the natural Man's Trinity, and his carnal Self is theſe in Unity. It was our firſt Sin, to aſpire to be as Gods; and it is the greateſt Sin that is propagated in our Nature from Generation to Generation. When God ſhould guide us, we guide ourſelves; when he ſhould be our Sovereign, we rule ourſelves; the Laws which he gives us we find Fault with, and would correct; and if we had the making of them, we would have made them otherwiſe; when he ſhould take Care of us, (and muſt, or we periſh) we will care for ourſelves; when we ſhould depend on him in daily Receivings, we had rather have our Portion in our own Hands; when we ſhould ſubmit to his Providence, we uſually quarrel at it, and think we could make a better Diſpoſal than God hath made. When we ſhould ſtudy and love, truſt and honour God, we ſtudy and love, truſt and honour, our carnal Selves. Inſtead of God, we would have all Men's Eyes and Dependance on us, and all Men's Thanks returned to us, and would gladly be the only Men on Earth extolled and admired by all. Thus we are naturally our own Idols. But down falls this *Dagon*, when God does once renew the Soul. It is the chief Deſign of that great Work, to bring the Heart back to God himſelf. He convinceth the Sinner,

ner, that the Creature can neither be his God, to make him happy, nor his Chriſt, to recover him from his Miſery, and reſtore him to God, who is his Happineſs. God does this, not only by his Word, but by Providence alſo. This is the Reaſon why Affliction ſo frequently coucurs in the Work of Converſion. Arguments which ſpeak to the quick, will force a Hearing, when the moſt powerful Words are ſlighted. If a Sinner made his Credit his God, and God ſhall caſt him into the loweſt Diſgrace, or bring him, who idolized his Riches, into a Condition wherein they cannot help him; or cauſe them to take Wing, and fly away; what a Help is here to this Work of Conviction? If a Man made Pleaſure his God, whatſoever a roving Eye, a curious Ear, a greedy Appetite, or a luſtful Heart could deſire, and God ſhould take theſe from him, or turn them into Gall and Wormwood; what a Help is here to Conviction? When God ſhall caſt a Man into languiſhing Sickneſs, and inflict Wounds on his Heart, and ſtir up againſt him his own Conſcience, and then, as it were, ſay to him, "Try if your Credit, Riches, or Pleaſures, can "help you. Can they heal your wounded "Conſcience? Can they now ſupport your "tottering Tabernacle? Can they keep your "departing Soul in your Body? or ſave you "from my everlaſting Wrath? or redeem your "Soul from eternal Flames? Cry aloud to "them, and ſee now whether theſe will be to

"you

" you inſtead of God and his Chriſt." O how this works now with the Sinner! Senſe acknowledges the Truth, and even the Fleſh is convinced of the Creature's Vanity, and our very Deceiver is undeceived.

§ 8. —THE People of God are likewiſe convinced of *the abſolute Neceſſity, the full Sufficiency, and perfect Excellency of Jeſus Chriſt:* As a Man in Famine is convinced of the Neceſſity of Food; or a Man that had heard, or read his Sentence of Condemnation, of the abſolute Neceſſity of Pardon; or a Man that lies in Priſon for Debt, is convinced of his Need of a Surety to diſcharge it. Now the Sinner feels an inſupportable Burthen upon him, and ſees there is none but Chriſt can take it off. He perceives the Law proclaims him a Rebel, and none but Chriſt can make his Peace. He is as a Man purſued by a Lion, that muſt periſh, if he finds not a preſent Sanctuary. He is now brought to this Dilemma; either he muſt have Chriſt to juſtify him, or be eternally condemned; have Chriſt to ſave him, or burn in Hell for ever; have Chriſt to bring him to God, or be ſhut out of his Preſence everlaſtingly. And no Wonder if he cry, as the Martyr, " None " but Chriſt, none but Chriſt." Not Gold, but Bread, will ſatisfy the Hungry; nor any Thing but Pardon will comfort the Condemned. *All Things* are *counted but Dung* now, *that he may win Chriſt; and what was Gain,* he

he *counts Loſs for Chriſt* (k). As the Sinner ſees his Miſery, and the Inability of himſelf, and all Things to relieve him, ſo he perceives there is no ſaving Mercy out of Chriſt. He ſees, though the Creature cannot, and himſelf cannot, yet Chriſt can. Though the Fig-Leaves of our own unrighteous Righteouſneſs are too ſhort to cover our Nakedneſs, yet the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt is large enough. Ours is diſproportionate to the Juſtice of the Law, but Chriſt's extends to every Tittle. If He intercede, there is no Denial; ſuch is the Dignity of his Perſon, and the Value of his Merits, that the Father grants all He deſires. Before, the Sinner knew Chriſt's Excellency, as a blind Man knows the Light of the Sun; but now, as one that beholds its Glory.

§ 9. (5) AFTER this deep Conviction, *the Will diſcovers alſo its Change.* As for Inſtance. —The *Sin*, which the Underſtanding pronounces evil, *the Will turns from with Abhorrence.* Not that the ſenſitive Appetite is changed, or any Way made to abhor its Object: But when it would prevail againſt Reaſon, and carry us to ſin againſt God, inſtead of Scripture being the Rule, and Reaſon the Maſter, and Senſe the Servant; this Diſorder and Evil, the Will abhors.—The *Miſery* alſo which Sin hath procured, *is not only diſcerned, but bewailed.* It is impoſſible that the Soul ſhould now look, either on its Treſpaſs againſt God, or yet on its

(k) Phil. iii. 7, 8.

its own ſelf-procured Calamity, without ſome Contrition. He that truly diſcerns that he hath killed Chriſt, and killed himſelf, will ſurely in ſome Meaſure be *pricked to the Heart* (l). If he cannot weep, he can heartily groan; and his Heart feels what his Underſtanding ſees.—— *The Creature is renounced as Vanity, and turned out of the Heart with Diſdain.* Not that it is undervalued, or the Uſe of it diſclaimed; but its idolatrous Abuſe, and its unjuſt Uſurpation. Can Chriſt be the Way, where the Creature is the End? Can we ſeek to Chriſt to reconcile us to God, while in our Hearts we prefer the Creature before him? In the Soul of every unregenerate Man, the Creature is both God and Chriſt. As turning from the Creature to God, and not by Chriſt, is no true turning; ſo believing in Chriſt, while the Creature hath our Hearts, is no true believing. Our Averſion from Sin, renouncing our Idols, and our right receiving Chriſt, is all but one Work, which God ever perfects where he begins.——At the ſame Time *the Will cleaves to God the Father, and to Chriſt.* Having been convinced, that nothing elſe can be his Happineſs, the Sinner now finds it is in God. Convinced alſo, that Chriſt alone is able and willing to make Peace for him, he moſt affectionately accepts of Chriſt for Saviour and Lord. *Paul*'s Preaching was *Repentance toward God, and Faith toward our Lord Jeſus Chriſt* (m). *And Life eternal* conſiſts

(l) Acts ii. 37. (m) Acts xx. 21.

conſiſts firſt in *knowing the only true God, and* then *Jeſus Chriſt, whom he hath ſent* (n). To take the Lord for our God, is the natural Part of the Covenant; the ſupernatural Part is, to take Chriſt for our Redeemer. The former is firſt neceſſary, and implied in the latter. To accept Chriſt without Affection and Love, is not juſtifying Faith. Nor does Love follow as a Fruit, but immediately concurs; for Faith is the receiving of Chriſt with the whole Soul. *He that loveth Father or Mother more than Chriſt, is not worthy of him* (o), nor is juſtified by him. Faith accepts him for Saviour and Lord: For in both Relations will he be received, or not at all. Faith not only acknowledges his Sufferings, and accepts of Pardon and Glory; but acknowledges his Sovereignty, and ſubmits to his Government and Way of Salvation.

§ 10. (6) As an eſſential Part of the Character of God's People, *they now enter into a cordial Covenant with Chriſt.* The Sinner was never ſtrictly, nor comfortably, in Covenant with Chriſt till now. He is ſure, by the free Offers, that Chriſt conſents; and now he cordially conſents himſelf; and ſo the Agreement is fully made.—With this Covenant Chriſt delivers up himſelf in all comfortable Relations to the Sinner; and the Sinner delivers up himſelf, to be ſaved, and ruled by Chriſt. Now the Soul reſolutely concludes, "I have been blind-
"ly led by Fleſh and Luſt, by the World and

(n) John xvii. 3. (o) Mat. x. 17.

" the Devil, too long, almoſt to my utter De-
" ſtruction: I will now be wholly at the Diſ-
" poſal of my Lord, who hath bought me
" with his Blood, and will bring me to his
" Glory."

§ 11. (7) I ADD, that *the People of God perſevere in this Covenant to the End.* Though the Believer may commit Sins, yet he never diſclaims his Lord, renounces his Allegiance, nor repents of his Covenant; nor can he properly be ſaid to break that Covenant, while that Faith continues, which is the Condition of it. Indeed, thoſe that have *verbally* covenanted, and not *cordially*, may *tread under Foot the Blood of the Covenant*, as *an unholy Thing*, *wherewith they were ſanctified* by Separation from thoſe without the Church (p); but *the Elect* cannot be ſo *deceived* (q). Though this Perſeverance be certain to true Believers, yet it is made a Condition of their Salvation, yea, of their continued Life and Fruitfulneſs, and of the Continuance of their Juſtification, though not of their firſt Juſtification itſelf (r). But eternally bleſſed be that Hand of Love, which hath drawn the free Promiſe, and ſubſcribed and ſealed to that which aſcertains us, both of the Grace which is the Condition, and the Kingdom which on that Condition is offered!

§ 12.

(p) Heb. x. 29. (q) Mat. xxiv. 24. (r) John xv. 4, 6, 9. vii. 31. Rev. ii. 25, 26. iii. 11, 12. Col. i. 23. Rom. xi. 22.

§ 12. SUCH are the Eſſentials of this People of God: Not a full Portraiture of them in all their Excellencies, nor all the Notes whereby they may be diſcerned. I beſeech thee, *Reader*, as thou haſt the Hope of a Chriſtian, or the Reaſon of a Man, judge thyſelf, as one that muſt ſhortly be judged by a righteous God, and faithfully anſwer theſe Queſtions. I will not enquire, whether thou remembereſt the Time or Order of theſe Workings of the Spirit; there may be much Uncertainty and Miſtake in that: If thou art ſure they are wrought in thee, the Matter is not ſo great, tho' thou knoweſt not when or how thou cameſt by them. But carefully examine and enquire, haſt thou been thoroughly convinced of a prevailing Depravation thro' thy whole Soul? and a prevailing Wickedneſs thro' thy whole Life? and how vile Sin is? and that, by the Covenant thou haſt tranſgreſſed, the leaſt Sin deſerves eternal Death? Doſt thou conſent to the Law, that it is true and righteous, and perceive thyſelf ſentenced to this Death by it? Haſt thou ſeen the utter Inſufficiency of every Creature, either to be itſelf thy Happineſs, or the Means of removing this thy Miſery? Haſt thou been convinced, that thy Happineſs is only in God, as the End; and in Chriſt, as the Way to him? and that thou muſt be brought to God through Chriſt, or periſh eternally? Haſt thou ſeen an abſolute Neceſſity of thy enjoying Chriſt, and the full Sufficiency in him, to do for thee what-

ſoever thy Caſe requires? Haſt thou diſcovered the Excellency of this *Pearl*, to be worth thy *ſelling all to buy it* (s)? Have thy Convictions been like thoſe of a Man that thirſts; and not merely a Change in Opinion, produced by Reading, or Education? Have both thy Sin and Miſery been the Abhorrence and Burthen of thy Soul? If thou couldſt not weep, yet couldſt thou heartily groan under the inſupportable Weight of both? Haſt thou renounced all thy own Righteouſneſs? Haſt thou turned thy Idols out of thy Heart, ſo that the Creature hath no more the Sovereignty, but is now a Servant to God and Chriſt? Doſt thou accept of Chriſt as thy only Saviour, and expect thy Juſtification, Recovery, and Glory, from him alone? Are his Laws the moſt powerful Commanders of thy Life and Soul? Do they ordinarily prevail againſt the Commands of the Fleſh, and againſt the greateſt Intereſt of thy Credit, Profit, Pleaſure, or Life? Has Chriſt the higheſt Room in thy Heart and Affections, ſo that tho' thou canſt not love him as thou wouldſt, yet nothing elſe is loved ſo much? Haſt thou to this End made a hearty Covenant with him, and delivered up thyſelf to him? Is it thy utmoſt Care and watchful Endeavour, that thou mayſt be found faithful in this Covenant; and tho' thou fall into Sin, yet wouldſt not renounce thy Bargain, nor change thy Lord, nor give up thyſelf to any other Government for all

(s) Mat. xiii. 46.

all the World?—If this be truly thy Caſe, thou art one of the People of God in my Text; and as ſure as the Promiſe of God is true, this bleſſed Reſt remains for thee. Only ſee thou *abide in Chriſt* (t), and *endure to the End* (u); for *if any Man draw back, His Soul ſhall have no Pleaſure in him* (w).—But if no ſuch Work be found within thee; whatever thy deceived Heart may think, or how ſtrong ſoever thy falſe Hopes may be; thou wilt find to thy Coſt, except thorough Converſion prevent it, that the Reſt of the Saints belongs not to thee. *O that thou wert wiſe, that thou wouldſt underſtand this, that thou wouldſt conſider thy latter End* (x)! That yet, while thy Soul is in thy Body, and *a Price in thy Hand* (y), and Opportunity and Hope before thee, thine Ears may be open, and thy Heart yield to the Perſuaſions of God, that ſo thou mighteſt reſt among his People, and enjoy *the Inheritance of the Saints in Light* (z)!

§ 13. THAT *this Reſt ſhall be enjoyed by the People of God*, is a Truth which the Scripture, if its Teſtimony be further needed, clearly aſſerts in a Variety of Ways. As for Inſtance.—That they are *fore-ordained to it, and it for them. God is not aſhamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a City* (a). They are ſtiled *Veſſels of Mercy, afore prepared unto Glory* (b). *In Chriſt they have obtained an In-*

 heritance,

(t) John xv. 4. (u) Mat. xxiv. 13. (w) Heb. x. 38.
(x) Deut. xxxii. 29. (y) Prov. xvii. 16. (z) Col. i. 12.
(a) Heb. xi. 16. (b) Rom. ix. 23.

heritance, being predeſtinated according to the Purpoſe of him, who worketh all Things after the Counſel of his own Will (c). And *whom he did predeſtinate, them he alſo glorified* (d). Who can bereave his People of that Reſt, which is deſigned for them by God's eternal Purpoſe?—Scripture tells us, they are *redeemed to this Reſt. By the Blood of Jeſus we have Boldneſs to enter into the Holieſt* (e); whether that Entrance means by Faith and Prayer here, or by full Poſſeſſion hereafter. Therefore *the Saints* in Heaven *ſing a new Song* unto him who *has redeemed them to God by his Blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation, and made them Kings and Prieſts unto God* (f). Either Chriſt then muſt loſe his Blood and Sufferings, and never *ſee of the Travail of his Soul*, or elſe *there remaineth a Reſt to the People of God.*——In Scripture this Reſt is *promiſed to them.* As the Firmament with Stars, ſo are the ſacred Pages beſpangled with theſe divine Engagements. Chriſt ſays, *fear not, little Flock, for it is your Father's good Pleaſure to give you the Kingdom* (g). *I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my Table in my Kingdom* (h). *&c. &c. &c.*—All the *Means of Grace, the Operations of the Spirit upon the Soul*, and *gracious Actings of the Saints, every Command* to repent and believe, to faſt and pray, to knock and ſeek, to

(c) Ephes. i. 11. (d) Rom. viii. 30. (e) Heb. x. 19.
(f) Rev. v. 8—10. (g) Luke xii. 32. (h) Luke xxii. 29, 30.

to ſtrive and labour, to run and fight, prove that there remains a Reſt for the People of God. The Spirit would never kindle in us ſuch ſtrong Deſires after Heaven, ſuch Love to Jeſus Chriſt, if we ſhould not receive what we deſire and love. He that *guides our Feet into the Way of Peace* (i), will undoubtedly bring us to the End of Peace. How nearly are the Means and End conjoined? *The Kingdom of Heaven ſuffereth Violence, and the violent take it by Force* (k). They that *follow Chriſt in the Regeneration, ſhall ſit upon Thrones of Glory* (l).—Scripture aſſures us, that the Saints have the *Beginnings, Foretaſts, Earneſts, and Seals* of this Reſt here. *The Kingdom of God is within them* (m). *Tho' they have not ſeen Chriſt, yet loving him, and believing in him, they rejoice with Joy unſpeakable and full of Glory; receiving the End of their Faith, even the Salvation of their Soul* (n). They *rejoice in Hope of the Glory of God* (o). And does God *ſeal them with that holy Spirit of Promiſe, which is the Earneſt of their Inheritance*, and will he deny the full *Poſſeſſion* (p)?—The Scripture alſo mentions, by Name, *thoſe who have entered* into this Reſt. As *Enoch, Abraham, Lazarus*, the *Thief* that was crucified with Chriſt, &c. And if there be a Reſt for theſe, ſure there is a Reſt for all Believers. But it is in vain to heap up Scripture-Proof, ſeeing it is

(i) Luke i. 79. (k) Mat. xi. 12. (l) Mat. xix. 28.
(m) Luke xvii. 21. (n) 1 Pet. i. 8, 9. (o) Rom. v. 2.
(p) Ephes. i. 13, 14.

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(p) Ephes. i. 13, 14.

the very End of Scripture, to be a Guide to lead us to this bleſſed State, and to be the Charter and Grant by which we hold all our Title to it.

§ 14. SCRIPTURE not only proves, that this Reſt remains for the People of God, but alſo that *it remains for none but them*, ſo that the reſt of the World ſhall have no Part in it. *Without Holineſs no Man ſhall ſee the Lord* (q). *Except a Man be born again, he cannot ſee the Kingdom of God. He that believeth not the Son ſhall not ſee Life, but the Wrath of God abideth on him* (r). *No Whoremonger, nor unclean Perſon, nor covetous Man, who is an Idolater, hath any Inheritance in the Kingdom of Chriſt, and of God* (s). *The wicked ſhall be turned into Hell, and all the Nations that forget God* (t). *They all ſhall be damned, who believe not the Truth, but have Pleaſure in Unrighteouſneſs* (u). *The Lord Jeſus ſhall come in flaming Fire, to take Vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; who ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting Deſtruction from the Preſence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power* (w). Had the ungodly returned before their Life was expired, and been heartily willing to accept of Chriſt for their Saviour and their King, and to be ſaved by him in his Way, and upon his moſt reaſonable Terms, they might have been ſaved. God freely offered them

(q) Heb. xii. 14. (r) John iii. 3, 36. (s) Ephes. v. 5.
(t) Pſalm x. 17. (u) 2 Theſs. ii. 12. (w) 2 Theſs. i. 7—9.

them Life, and they would not accept it. The Pleaſures of the Fleſh ſeemed more deſirable to them than the Glory of the Saints. Satan offered them the one, and God offered them the other, and they had free Liberty to chuſe which they would, and they choſe *the Pleaſures of Sin for a Seaſon*, before the everlaſting Reſt with Chriſt. And is it not a righteous Thing, that they ſhould be denied that, which they would not accept? When God preſt them ſo earneſtly, and perſuaded them ſo importunately, to come in, and yet they would not, where ſhould they be but among the *Dogs without?* Tho' Man be ſo wicked, that he will not yield till the mighty Power of Grace prevail with him, yet ſtill we may truly ſay, that he may be ſaved, if he will, on God's Terms. His Inability, being Moral, and lying in willful Wickedneſs, is no more Excuſe to him, than it is to an Adulterer, that he *cannot* love his own Wife, or to a malicious Perſon, that he *cannot* but hate his own Brother: Is he not ſo much the worſe, and deſerving of ſo much the ſorer Puniſhment? Sinners ſhall lay all the Blame on their own Wills in Hell for ever. Hell is a rational Torment by Conſcience, according to the Nature of the rational Subject. If Sinners could but then ſay, *it was long of God and not of us*, it would quiet their Conſciences, and eaſe their Torments, and make Hell to them to be no Hell. But to remember their Wilfullneſs, will

feed

feed the Fire, and cauſe *the Worm* of Conſcience *never to die* (x).

§ 15. *It is the Will of God, that this Reſt ſhould yet remain for his People, and not be enjoyed till they come to another World.*——Who ſhould diſpoſe of the Creatures, but he that made them? You may as well ask, why have we not Spring and Harveſt without Winter? or, why is the Earth below, and the Heaven above, as, why we have not Reſt on Earth? All Things muſt come to their Perfection by Degrees. The ſtrongeſt Man muſt firſt be a Child. The greateſt Scholar muſt firſt begin in his Alphabet. The talleſt Oak was once an Acorn. This Life is our Infancy; and would we be perfect in the Womb, or born at full Stature?——If our Reſt was here, moſt of God's Providences muſt be uſeleſs. Should God loſe the Glory of his Church's miraculous Deliverances, and the Fall of his Enemies, that Men may have their Happineſs here? If we were all happy, innocent, and perfect, what Uſe were there for the glorious Works of our Sanctification, Juſtification, and future Salvation?——If we wanted nothing, we ſhould not depend on God ſo cloſely, nor call upon him ſo earneſtly. How little ſhould he hear from us, if we had what we would have? God would never have had ſuch Songs of Praiſe from *Moſes* at the Red Sea, and in the Wilderneſs, from *Deborah* and *Hannah*, from *David* and *Hezekiah*, if they had been the Chuſers

(x) Mark ix. 44.

Chuſers of their own Condition. Have not thy own higheſt Praiſes to God, *Reader*, been occaſioned by thy Dangers or Miſeries? The greateſt Glory and Praiſe God has through the World, is for Redemption, Reconciliation, and Salvation by Chriſt; and was not Man's Miſery the Occaſion of that?—And where God loſes the Opportunity of exerciſing his Mercies, Man muſt needs loſe the Happineſs of enjoying them. Where God loſes his Praiſe, Man will certainly loſe his Comforts. Oh the ſweet Comforts the Saints have had in Return to their Prayers! How ſhould we know what a tender-hearted Father we have, if we had not, as the Prodigal, been denied the Huſks of earthly Pleaſure and Profit? We ſhould never have felt Chriſt's tender Heart, if we had not felt ourſelves *weary and heavy-laden, hungry and thirſty, poor and contrite*. It is a Delight to a Soldier, or Traveller, to look back on his Eſcapes when they are over: And for a Saint in Heaven to look back on his Sins and Sorrows upon Earth, his Fears and Tears, his Enemies and Dangers, his Wants and Calamities, muſt make his Joy more joyful. Therefore the Bleſſed, in praiſing the Lamb, mention his *redeeming them out of every Nation, and Kindred and Tongue*; and ſo out of their Miſery, and Wants, and Sins, *and making them Kings and Prieſts to God*. But if they had nothing but Content and Reſt on Earth, what Room would there have been for theſe Rejoicings hereafter?

§ 16.

§ 16. BESIDES, *we are not capable of Reſt upon Earth.*——Can a *Soul* that is ſo *weak in Grace*, ſo *prone to Sin*, ſo nearly *joined to ſuch a Neighbour* as this Fleſh, have full Content and Reſt in ſuch a Caſe? What is Soul-Reſt, but our Freedom from Sin, and Imperfections, and Enemies? And can the Soul have Reſt that is peſtered with all theſe, and that continually? Why do Chriſtians ſo oft cry out in the Language of *Paul*, *O wretched Man that I am, who ſhall deliver me* (y)? What makes them *preſs towards the Mark*, and *run that they may obtain*, and *ſtrive to enter in*, if they are capable of Reſt in their preſent Condition?——And our *Bodies are incapable*, as well as our Souls. They are not now thoſe Sun-like Bodies which they ſhall be, when *this corruptible* hath *put on Incorruption, and this mortal put on Immortality*. They are our Priſons, and our Burthens; ſo full of Infirmities and Defects, that we are fain to ſpend moſt of our Time in repairing them, and ſupplying their continual Wants. Is it poſſible that an immortal Soul ſhould have Reſt in ſuch a diſtempered, noiſome Habitation? Surely theſe ſickly, weary, loathſome Bodies muſt be refined, before they can be capable of enjoying Reſt.—The *Objects we here enjoy* are inſufficient to afford us Reſt? Alas! what is there in all the World to give us Reſt? They that have moſt of it, have the greateſt Burthen. They that ſet moſt by it, and rejoice moſt in it, do all cry out

(y) Rom vii. 24.

out at laſt of its Vanity and Vexation. Men promiſe themſelves a Heaven upon Earth; but when they come to enjoy it, it flies from them. He that has any Regard to the Works of the Lord, may eaſily ſee, that the very End of them is to take down our Idols, to make us weary of the World, and ſeek our Reſt in him. Where does he croſs us moſt, but where we promiſe Ourſelves moſt Content? If you have a Child you dote upon, it becomes your Sorrow. If you have a Friend you truſt in, and judge unchangeable, he becomes your Scourge. Is this a Place or State of Reſt?—And as the Objects we here enjoy are inſufficient for our Reſt, ſo *God who is ſufficient, is here little enjoyed.* It is not here that he hath prepared the Preſence-Chamber for his Glory. He hath drawn the Curtain between us and him. We are far from him as Creatures, and farther as frail Mortals, and fartheſt as Sinners. We hear now and then a Word of Comfort from him, and receive his Love-Tokens, to keep up our Hearts and Hopes; but this is not our full Enjoyment. And can any Soul that hath made God his Portion, as every one hath that ſhall be ſaved by him, find Reſt in ſo vaſt a Diſtance from him, and ſo ſeldom and ſmall Enjoyment of him?—Nor are we now capable of Reſt, as *there is a Worthineſs muſt go before it.* Chriſt *will give the Crown* to none but the Worthy. And are we fit for the Crown, before we have overcome? Or for the Prize, before we have

run

run the Race? Or to receive our Penny, before we have worked in the Vineyard; or to be Rulers of Ten Cities, before we have improved our Ten Talents? Or to enter into the Joy of our Lord, before we have well done, as good and faithful Servants? God will not alter the Courſe of Juſtice to give you *Reſt* before you have *laboured*, nor the Crown of Glory, till you have *overcome*.—There's Reaſon enough why our *Reſt* ſhould *remain* till the Life to come. Take Heed then, *Chriſtian Reader*, how thou dareſt to contrive and care for a Reſt on Earth; or to murmur at God for thy Trouble, and Toil, and Wants in the Fleſh. Doth thy Poverty *weary* thee? Thy Sickneſs? Thy bitter Enemies and unkind Friends? It ſhould be ſo here. Do the Abominations of the Times, the Sins of Profeſſors, the Hardening of the wicked, all *weary* thee? It muſt be ſo, while thou art abſent from thy *Reſt*. Do thy Sins, and thy naughty, diſtempered Heart *weary* thee? Be thus *wearied* more and more. But under all this *Wearineſs*, are thou willing to go to God thy *Reſt?* And to have thy Warfare accompliſhed? And thy Race and Labour ended? If not, complain more of thy own Heart, and get it more weary, till *Reſt* ſeem more deſirable.

§ 17. I HAVE but one Thing more to add, for the Cloſe of this Chapter, that *the Souls of Believers do enjoy inconceivable Bleſſedneſs and Glory, even while they remain ſeparated from their Bodies*.—What can be more plain than thoſe

thoſe Words of *Paul? We are always confident, knowing that whilſt we are at Home*, or rather ſojourning *in the Body, we are abſent from the Lord (For we walk by Faith, not by Sight). We are confident, I ſay, and willing rather to be abſent from the Body, and to be preſent with the Lord* (z).—Or thoſe? *I am in a Strait betwixt two, having a Deſire to depart, and to be with Chriſt, which is far better* (a).—If *Paul* had not expected to enjoy Chriſt till the Reſurrection, why ſhould he be in a Strait; or deſire to depart? Nay, ſhould he not have been loth to depart upon the very ſame Grounds? For while he was in the Fleſh, he enjoyed ſomething of Chriſt.——Plain enough is that of Chriſt to the Thief; *To-day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe* (b).——In the Parable of *Dives* and *Lazarus*, it ſeems unlikely Chriſt would ſo evidently intimate and ſuppoſe the Soul's Happineſs or Miſery preſently after Death, if there were no ſuch Matter (c).——Our Lord's Argument for the Reſurrection ſuppoſes, that, *God being not the God of the Dead, but of the Living* (d), therefore *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, were then living in Soul.—— If the *Bleſſedneſs* of *the Dead that die in the Lord* (e), were only in reſting in the Grave, then a Beaſt or a Stone were as bleſſed; nay, it were evidently a Curſe, and not a Bleſſing. For was not Life a

(z) 2 Cor. v. 6—8.
(b) Luke xxiii. 43.
(d) Mat. xxii. 32.
(a) Phil. i. 23.
(c) Luke xvi. 19—31.
(e) Rev. xiv. 13.

a great Mercy? Was it not a greater Mercy to ſerve God and do Good; to enjoy all the Comforts of Life, the Fellowſhip of Saints, the Comfort of Ordinances, and much of Chriſt in all; than to lie rotting in the Grave? Therefore ſome farther Bleſſedneſs is there promiſed. ——How elſe is it ſaid, *We are come to the Spirits of juſt Men made perfect* (f)? Sure, at the Reſurrection, the Body will be made perfect as well as the Spirit.——Does not Scripture tell us, that *Enoch* and *Elias* are taken up already? And ſhall we think they poſſeſs that Glory alone?——Did not *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, ſee *Moſes* alſo with Chriſt on the Mount; Yet the Scripture ſaith, *Moſes* died. And is it likely that Chriſt deluded their Senſes, in ſhewing them *Moſes*, if he ſhould not partake of that Glory till the Reſurrection?——And is not that of *Stephen* as plain as we can deſire? *Lord Jeſus, receive my Spirit* (g). Surely, if the Lord receive it, it is neither aſleep, nor dead, nor annihilated; but it is where he is, and beholds his Glory.——That of the *wiſe Man* is of the ſame Import; *The Spirit ſhall return unto God who gave it* (h).——Why are we ſaid to *have eternal Life*; and that to *know God is Life eternal*; and that a *Believer on the Son hath everlaiſting Life?* Or how is *the Kingdom of God within us?* If there be as great an Interruption of our Life, as till the Reſurrection, this is no eternal Life, nor everlaſting Kingdom.—

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(f) Heb. xii. 22, 23 .(g) Acts vii. 59. (h) Eccl. xii. 7.

The Cities of Sodom and Gomorrah are ſpoken of as *ſuffering the Vengeance of eternal Fire* (i). And if the Wicked already ſuffer eternal Fire, then no doubt but the Godly enjoy eternal Bleſſedneſs.——When *John* ſaw his glorious Revelations, he is ſaid to be *in the Spirit*, and to be *carried away in the Spirit*. And when *Paul* was *caught up to the third Heaven*, he knew not, *whether in the Body, or out of the Body* (k). This implies, that Spirits are capable of theſe glorious Things, without the Help of their Bodies. ——Is not ſo much implied when *John* ſays, *I ſaw under the Altar the Souls of them that were ſlain for the Word of God?* (l)——When Chriſt ſays, *Fear not them which kill the Body, but are not able to kill the Soul* (m), does it not plainly imply, that when wicked Men have killed our Bodies, that is, have ſeparated the Souls from them, yet the Souls are ſtill alive? ——The Soul of Chriſt was alive when his Body was dead, and therefore ſo ſhall ours too. This appears by his Words to the Thief, *To-day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe*; and alſo by his Voice on the Croſs, *Father, into thy Hands I commend my Spirit* (n),—If *the Spirits* of thoſe *that were diſobedient in the Days of Noah*, were *in Priſon* (o), that is, in a living and ſuffering State; then certainly the ſeparate Spirits of the Juſt are in an oppoſite Condition

(i) Jude v. 7.
(k) Rev. i. 10. iv. 2. 2 Cor. xii. 2.
(l) Rev. vi. 9.
(m) Mat. x. 28.
(n) Luke xxiii. 46.
(o) 1. Pet. iii. 19, 20.

of Happineſs.—Therefore, faithful Souls ſhall no ſooner leave their Priſons of Fleſh, but Angels will be their Convoy; Chriſt, with all the perfected Spirits of the Juſt, will be their Companions; Heaven will be their Reſidence, and God their Happineſs. When ſuch die, they may boldly and believingly ſay, as *Stephen*, *Lord Jeſus, receive my Spirit*; and *commend* it, as Chriſt did, *into a Father's Hands.*

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

The Misery of those who lose the Saints Rest.

§ 1. *The Reader, if unregenerate, urged to consider what the Loss of Heaven will be.* § 2. (I) *The Loss of Heaven particularly includes,* § 3. (1) *The personal Perfection of the Saints;* § 4 (2) *God himself;* § 5. (3) *all delightful Affections towards God;* § 6. (4) *the blessed Society of Angels and glorified Spirits.* § 7. (II) *The Aggravations of the Loss of Heaven:* § 8. (1) *The Understanding of the Ungodly will then be cleared;* § 9. (2) *also enlarged:* § 10. (3) *Their Consciences will make a true and close Application:* § 11 (4) *Their Affections will be more lively:* § 12—18. (5) *Their Memories will be large and strong.* § 19. *Conclusion of the Chapter.*

§ 1. IF thou, *Reader*, art a Stranger to Christ, and to the holy Nature and Life of his People, who are before described, and shalt live and die in this Condition, let me tell thee, thou shalt never partake of the Joys of Heaven, nor have the least Taste of the Saints eternal Rest. I may say, as *Ehud* to *Eglon*, *I have a Message*

to thee from God (a); that as the Word of God is true, thou ſhalt never ſee the Face of God with Comfort. This Sentence I am commanded to paſs upon thee; take it as thou wilt, and eſcape if thou canſt. I know thy humble and hearty Subjection to Chriſt would procure thy Eſcape; he would then acknowledge thee for one of his People, and give thee a Portion in the Inheritance of his Choſen. If this might be the happy Succeſs of my Meſſage, I ſhould be ſo far from repining, like *Jonas*, that the Threatenings of God are not executed upon thee, that I ſhould bleſs the Day that ever God made me ſo happy a Meſſenger. But if thou end thy Days in thy unregenerate State, as ſure as the Heavens are over thy Head, and the Earth under thy Feet, thou ſhalt be ſhut out of the Reſt of the Saints, and receive thy Portion in everlaſting Fire. I expect thou wilt turn upon me, and ſay, When did God ſhew you the Book of Life, or tell you who they are that ſhall be ſaved, and who ſhut out? I anſwer, I do not name thee, nor any other; I only conclude it of the Unregenerate in general, and of thee, if thou be ſuch a one. Nor do I go about to determine who ſhall repent, and who ſhall not; much leſs, that thou ſhalt never repent. I had rather ſhew thee what Hopes thou haſt before thee, if thou wilt not ſit ſtill, and loſe them. I would far rather perſuade thee to hearken in Time, before the Door is ſhut againſt thee, than tell

(a) Judges iii. 20.

tell thee there is no Hope of thy repenting and returning. But if the foregoing Deſcription of the People of God does not agree with the State of thy Soul, is it then a hard Queſtion, whether thou ſhalt ever be ſaved? Need I aſcend up into Heaven to know, that *without Holineſs no Man ſhall ſee the Lord*; or that only *the pure in Heart ſhall ſee God*; or, that *except a Man be born again, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God?* Need I go up to Heaven, to enquire that of Chriſt, which he came down to Earth to tell us; and ſent his Spirit in his Apoſtles to tell us; and which he and they have left upon Record to all the World? And tho' I know not the Secrets of thy Heart, and therefore cannot tell thee by Name, whether it be thy State, or no; yet, if thou art but willing and diligent, thou mayſt know thyſelf, whether thou art an Heir of Heaven or not. 'Tis the main Thing I deſire, that if thou art yet miſerable, thou mayſt diſcern and eſcape it. But *how* canſt thou *eſcape, if thou neglect* Chriſt and *Salvation?* 'Tis as impoſſible, as for the Devils themſelves to be ſaved. Nay, God has more plainly and frequently ſpoken it in Scripture of ſuch Sinners as thou art, than he has of the Devils. Methinks a Sight of thy Caſe ſhould ſtrike thee with Amazement and Horror. When *Belſhazzar ſaw the Fingers of a Man's Hand that wrote upon the Wall, his Countenance was changed, and his Thoughts troubled him, ſo that the Joints of his Loins were looſed, and his*

Knees smote one against another (b): What Trembling then should seize on thee, who hast the Hand of God himself against thee, not in a Sentence or two, but in the very Scope of the Scriptures, threatening the Loss of an Everlasting Kingdom? Because I would fain have thee lay it to Heart, I will shew thee——*the Nature of thy Loss of Heaven*,——together with *its Aggravations*.

§ 2. (I.) In their *Loss of Heaven* the Ungodly lose——*the Saints personal Perfection*,——*God himself*,——*all delightful Affections towards God*,——and *the blessed Society of Angels and Saints*.

§ 3. (1) *The glorious personal Perfection which the Saints enjoy in Heaven*, is the great Loss of the Ungodly. They lose that shining Lustre of the Body, surpassing the Brightness of the Sun at Noon-Day. Though the Bodies of the Wicked will be raised more spiritual than they were upon Earth, yet that will only make them capable of the more exquisite Torments. They would be glad *then*, if every Member were a dead Member, that it might not feel the Punishment inflicted on it; and if the whole Body were a rotten Carcase, or might lie down again in the Dust. Much more do they want that moral Perfection which the Blessed partake of; those holy Dispositions of Mind; that chearful Readiness to do the Will of God; that perfect Rectitude of all their Actions. Instead of

(b) Dan. v. 5, 6.

of theſe, they have that Perverſeneſs of Will, that Loathing of Good, that Love to Evil, that Violence of Paſſion, which they had on Earth. 'Tis true, their Underſtandings will be much cleared by the ceaſing of former Temptations, and experiencing the Falſhood of former Deluſions. But they have the ſame Diſpoſitions ſtill; and fain would they commit the ſame Sins, if they could; they want but Opportunity. There will be a greater Difference between theſe Wretches, and the glorified Chriſtian, than there is betwixt a Toad, and the Sun in the Firmament. The *rich Man's Purple, and fine Linnen, and ſumptuous Fare*, did not ſo exalt him above *Lazarus, while at his Gate full of Sores.*

§ 4. (2) THEY ſhall have *no comfortable Relation to God, nor Communion with him. As they did not like to retain God in their Knowledge*; but ſaid unto him, *Depart from us, for we deſire not the Knowledge of thy Ways*; ſo God will abhor to retain them in his Houſehold. He will never admit them to the Inheritance of his Saints, nor endure them to ſtand in his Preſence, but *will profeſs unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work Iniquity.* They are ready *now* to lay as confident Claim to Chriſt and Heaven, as if they were ſincere believing Saints. The Swearer, the Drunkard, the Whoremaſter, the Worldling, can ſay, Is not God our Father, as well as yours? But when Chriſt ſeparates his Followers from his Foes, and his

faithful Friends from his deceived Flatterers, where then will be their preſumptuous Claim? Then they ſhall find that God is not their Father, becauſe they would not be his People. As they would not conſent that God by his Spirit ſhould dwell in them, ſo the Tabernacle of Wickedneſs ſhall have no Fellowſhip with him, nor the World inhabit the City of God. Only they that walked with God here, ſhall live and be happy with him in Heaven. Little does the World know what a Loſs that Soul hath, who loſes God? What a Dungeon would Earth be, if it had loſt the Sun? What a Loathſome Carrion the Body, if it had loſt the Soul? Yet all theſe are nothing to the Loſs of God. As the Enjoyment of God is the Heaven of the Saints, ſo the Loſs of God is the Hell of the Ungodly. And as the enjoying of God is the enjoying of All, ſo the Loſs of God is the Loſs of All.

§ 5. (3) THEY alſo loſe *all delightful Affections towards God.* That tranſporting Knowledge; thoſe delightful Views of his glorious Face; the unconceivable Pleaſure of loving him; the Apprehenſions of his infinite Love to us; the conſtant Joys of his Saints; and the Rivers of Conſolation with which he ſatisfies them. Is it nothing to loſe all this? The Employment of a King in ruling a Kingdom, does not ſo far exceed *that* of the vileſt Slave, as this heavenly Employment exceeds *that* of an earthly King. God ſuits Men's Employments to their Natures. Your Hearts, *Sinners*, were never ſet upon

upon God in your Lives, never warmed with his Love, never longed after the Enjoyment of him; you had no Delight in ſpeaking or hearing of him; you had rather have continued on Earth, if you had known how, than be intereſted in the glorious Praiſes of God. Is it meet then that you ſhould be Members of the celeſtial Choir?

§ 6. (4) THEY ſhall be deprived of *the bleſſed Society of Angels and glorified Saints.* Inſtead of being Companions of thoſe happy Spirits, and numbered with thoſe triumphant Kings, they muſt be Members of the Corporation of Hell, where they ſhall have Companions of a far different Nature and Quality. Scorning and abuſing the Saints, hating them, and rejoicing in their Calamities, was not the Way to obtain their Bleſſedneſs. Now you are ſhut out of that Company, from which you firſt ſhut out yourſelves; and are ſeparated from them, with whom you would not be joined. You could not endure them in your Houſes, nor Towns, nor ſcarce in the Kingdom. You took them, as *Ahab* did *Elijah*, for the *Troublers of the Land*; and, as the *Apoſtles* were taken, for *Men that turned the World upſide down.* If any Thing fell out amiſs, you thought all was owing to them. When they were dead or baniſhed, you were glad they were gone, and thought the Country well rid of them. They moleſted you by faithfully reproving your Sins. Their holy Converſation troubled your Conſciences, to ſee them

ſo

so far excel you. It was a Vexation to you, to hear them pray or sing Praises in their Families. And is it any Wonder if you be separated from them hereafter? The Day is near when they will trouble you no more. *Betwixt them and you will be a great Gulf fixed.* Even in this Life, while the Saints were *mocked, destitute, afflicted, tormented,* and while they had their personal Imperfections; yet, in the Judgment of the Holy Ghost, they were such *of whom the World was not worthy* (c). Much more unworthy will the World be of their Fellowship in Glory.

§ 7. (II) I KNOW many will be ready to think, they could spare these Things in this World well enough, and why may they not be without them in the World to come? Therefore to shew them that *this Loss of Heaven will then be most tormenting,* let them now consider, ——*their Understandings will be cleared to know their Loss,*——and *have more enlarged Apprehensions concerning it,*——*their Consciences will make a closer Application of it to themselves,*—— *their Affections will no longer be stupified,*—— nor *their Memories be treacherous.*

§ 8. (1) *The Understandings of the Ungodly will then be cleared, to know the Worth of that which they have lost.* Now they lament not their Loss of God, because they never knew His Excellence; nor the Loss of that holy Employment and Society, for they were never sensible what they

(c) Heb. xi. 36—38.

they were worth. A Man that has loſt a Jewel, and took it but for a common Stone, is never troubled at his Loſs; but when he comes to know what he loſt, then he laments it. Though the Underſtanding of the Damned will not be ſanctified, yet they will be cleared from a Multitude of Errors. They now think that their Honours and Eſtates, Pleaſures, Health, and Life, are better worth their Labour, than the Things of another World; but when theſe Things have left them in Miſery, when they experience the Things which before they did but read and hear of, they will be of another Mind. They would not believe that Water would drown, till they were in the Sea; nor the Fire burn, till they were caſt into it; but when they feel, they will eaſily believe. All that Error of Mind which made them ſet light by God, and abhor his Worſhip, and vilify his People, will then be confuted and removed by Experience. Their Knowledge ſhall be increaſed, that their Sorrows may be increaſed. Poor Souls! they would be comparatively happy, if their Underſtandings were wholly taken from them, if they had no more Knowledge than Ideots, or brute Beaſts; or if they knew no more in Hell, than they did upon Earth, their Loſs would leſs trouble them. How happy would they *then* think themſelves, if they did not know there is ſuch a Place as Heaven! *Now*, when their Knowledge would help to prevent their Miſery, they will not know, or will not read and ſtudy that they may know;

know; therefore when their Knowledge will but feed their conſuming Fire, they ſhall know whether they will or no. They are now in a dead Sleep, and dream they are the happieſt Men in the World; but when Death awakes them, how will their Judgments be changed in a Moment? and they that would not ſee, ſhall then ſee, and be aſhamed.

§ 9. (2) As *their Underſtanding* will be cleared, ſo it *will be more enlarged, and made more capacious to conceive the Worth of that Glory which they have loſt.* The Strength of their Apprehenſions, as well as the Truth of them, will then be increaſed. What deep Apprehenſions, of the Wrath of God, the Madneſs of ſinning, the Miſery of Sinners, have thoſe Souls that now endure this Miſery, in Compariſon with thoſe on Earth that do but hear of it? What Senſibility of the Worth of Life has the condemned Man that is going to be executed, compared with what he was wont to have in the Time of his Proſperity? Much more will the actual Loſs of Eternal Bleſſedneſs make the Damned exceedingly apprehenſive of the Greatneſs of their Loſs; and as a large Veſſel will hold more Water than a Shell, ſo will their more enlarged Underſtandings contain more Matter to feed their Torment, than their ſhallow Capacity can now do.

§ 10. (3) *Their Conſciences alſo will make a truer and cloſer Application of this Doctrine to themſelves, which will exceedingly tend to increaſe their*

their Torment. It will then be no hard Matter to them to ſay, " This is my Loſs! and this is " my everlaſting remedileſs Miſery!" The Want of this Self-Application is the main Cauſe, why they are ſo little troubled now. They are hardly brought to believe that there is ſuch a State of Miſery; but more hardly to believe that it is like to be their own. This makes ſo many Sermons loſt to them, and all Threatenings and Warnings in vain. Let a Miniſter of Chriſt ſhew them their Miſery ever ſo plainly and faithfully, they will not be perſuaded they are ſo miſerable. Let him tell them of the Glory they muſt loſe, and the Sufferings they muſt feel, and they think he means not *them*, but ſome notorious Sinners. It is one of the hardeſt Things in the World, to bring a wicked Man to know that he is wicked, or to make him ſee himſelf in a State of Wrath and Condemnation. Though they may eaſily find by their Strangeneſs to the new Birth, and their Enmity to Holineſs, that they never were partakers of them; yet they as verily expect to *ſee God*, and *be ſaved*, as if they were the moſt ſanctified Perſons in the World. How ſeldom do Men cry out, after the plaineſt Diſcovery of their State, *I am the Man?* or acknowledge, that if they die in their preſent Condition, they are undone for ever? But when they ſuddenly find themſelves in the Land of Darkneſs, feel themſelves in ſcorching Flames, and ſee they are ſhut out of the Preſence of God for ever; then

then the Application of God's Anger to themſelves will be the eaſieſt Matter in the World. They will then roar out theſe forced Confeſſions, "O my Miſery! O my Folly! O my unconceivable, irrecoverable Loſs!"

§ 11. (4) *Then will their Affections likewiſe be more lively, and no longer ſtupified.* A hard Heart now makes Heaven and Hell ſeem but Trifles. We have ſhewed them everlaſting Glory and Miſery, and they are as Men aſleep; our Words are as Stones caſt againſt a Wall, which fly back in our Faces. We talk of terrible Things, but it is to dead Men; we ſearch their Wounds, but they never feel us; we ſpeak to Rocks, rather than to Men; the Earth will as ſoon tremble as they. But when theſe dead Souls are revived, what paſſionate Senſibibility! what working Affections! what Pangs of Horror! what Depth of Sorrow will there then be! How violently will they fly in their own Faces! How will they rage againſt their former Madneſs! The Lamentations of the moſt affectionate Wife for the Loſs of her Huſband, or of the tendereſt Mother for the Loſs of her Children, will be nothing to theirs for the Loſs of Heaven. O the ſelf-accuſing and ſelf-tormenting Fury of thoſe forlorn Creatures! How will they even tear their own Hearts, and be God's Executioners upon themſelves! As themſelves were the only meritorious Cauſe of their Sufferings, ſo themſelves will be the chief Executioners. Even Satan, as he was not ſo great

great a Cauſe of their ſinning as themſelves, he will not be ſo great an Inſtrument of their Torment. How happy would they think themſelves *then*, if they were turned into Rocks, or any Thing that had neither Paſſion nor Senſe! How happy, if they could then *feel*, as lightly as they were wont to *hear!* if they could ſleep out the Time of Execution, as they did the Time of the Sermons that warned them of it! But their Supidity is gone; it will not be.

§ 12. (5) *Their Memories will moreover be as large and ſtrong as their Underſtandings and Affections.* Could they but loſe the Uſe of their Memory, their Loſs of Heaven being forgot, would little trouble them. Tho' they would account Annihilation a ſingular Mercy, they cannot lay aſide any Part of their Being. Underſtanding, Conſcience, Affections, Memory, muſt all live to torment them, which ſhould have helped to their Happineſs. As by theſe they ſhould have fed upon the Love of God, and drawn forth perpetually the Joys of his Preſence; ſo by theſe muſt they feed upon his Wrath, and draw forth continually the Pains of his Abſence. *Now* they have no Leiſure to conſider, nor any Room in their Memories for the Things of another Life; but *then* they ſhall have nothing elſe to do; their Memories ſhall have no other Employment. God would have had the Doctrine of their eternal State *written on the Poſts of their Doors, on their Hands and Hearts*; he would have had them mind

mind it, and *mention it when they lay down and roſe up, when they ſat in their Houſe, and when they walked by the Way*; and ſeeing they rejected this Counſel of the Lord, therefore it ſhall be written always before them in the Place of their Thraldom, that which Way ſoever they look, they may ſtill behold it.——It will torment them *to think of the Greatneſs of the Glory they have loſt*. If it had been what they could have ſpared, or a Loſs to be repaired with any Thing elſe, it had been a ſmall Matter. If it had been Health, or Wealth, or Friends, or Life, it had been nothing. But, oh! to loſe *that exceeding eternal Weight of Glory!*——It will alſo torment them *to think of the Poſſibility they once had of obtaining it*. Then they will remember, "Time was, when I was as fair "for the Kingdom as others. I was ſet up-"on the Stage of the World; if I had played "my Part wiſely and faithfully, I might now "have had Poſſeſſion of the Inheritance. I "might have been among yonder bleſſed "Saints, who am now tormented with theſe "damned Fiends. The Lord did *ſet before me* "*Life and Death*; and having choſe Death, "I deſerve to ſuffer it. *The Prize* was held "out before me; if I had *run well*, I might "have *obtained it*, if I had *ſtriven*, I might "have had *the Victory*; if I had *fought* valiant-"ly, I had been *crowned*."——It will yet more torment them *to remember, that their obtaining the Crown was*, not only poſſible, but *very probable*.

probable. It will wound them to think, " I " had once the Gales of the Spirit ready to " have aſſiſted me. I was purpoſing to be ano- " ther Man, to have cleaved to Chriſt, and " forſook the World. I was *almoſt* reſolved to " have been wholly for God. I was once even " turning from my baſe ſeducing Luſts. I had " caſt off my old Companions, and was aſ- " ſociating myſelf with the Godly. Yet I tur- " ned back, loſt my Hold, and broke my Pro- " miſes. I was *almoſt perſuaded to be a* real " *Chriſtian*, yet I conquered thoſe Perſuaſions. " What Workings were in my Heart, when a " faithful Miniſter preſſed home the Truth! " O how fair was I once for Heaven! I almoſt " had it, and yet I have loſt it. Had I *follow-* " *ed on to ſeek the Lord*, I had now been bleſſed " among the Saints."

§ 13.——It will exceedingly torment them *to remember their loſt Opportunities.* " How " many Weeks, and Months, and Years, " did I loſe, which if I had improved I " might now have been happy! Wretch that I " was! could I find no Time to ſtudy the " Work, for which I had all my Time? no " Time among all my Labours, to labour for " Eternity? Had I Time to eat, and drink, " and ſleep, and none to ſave my Soul? Had " I Time for Mirth and vain Diſcourſe, and " none for Prayer? Could I take Time to ſe- " cure the World, and none to try my Title to " Heaven? O precious Time! I had once

" enough, and now I muſt have no more. I had
" once ſo much, that I knew not what to do
" with it; and now it is gone, and cannot be
" recalled. O that I had but one of thoſe Years
" to live over again! How ſpeedily would I
" repent! How earneſtly would I pray! How
" diligently would I hear! How cloſely would
" I examine my State! How ſtrictly would
" I live? But 'tis now too late, alas! too
" late."

§ 14.——It will add to their Calamity *to remember how often they were perſuaded to return.* " Fain would *the Miniſter* have had me
" eſcape theſe Torments. With what Love
" and Compaſſion did he beſeech me! And
" yet I did but make a Jeſt of it. How oft
" did he convince me! And yet I ſtifled all
" theſe Convictions. How did he open to me
" my very Heart! And yet I was loth to
" know the worſt of myſelf. O how glad
" would he have been, if he could have ſeen
" me cordially turn to Chriſt? *My godly Friends*
" admoniſhed me: They told me what would
" come of my Wilfulneſs and Negligence at
" laſt; but I neither believed, nor regarded
" them. How long did *God himſelf* conde-
" ſcend to intreat me! How did *the Spirit*
" *ſtrive* with my Heart, as if he was loth to
" take a Denial! How did *Chriſt ſtand knock-*
" *ing* one Sabbath after another, and crying to
" me, *Open, Sinner, open thy Heart to thy*
" *Saviour, and I will come in, and ſup with*
" *thee,*

" *thee, and thou with me! Why doſt thou delay?*
" *How long ſhall thy vain Thoughts lodge within*
" *thee? Wilt thou not be pardoned, and ſanctified,*
" *and made happy? When ſhall it once be?*" O how the Recollection of ſuch divine Pleadings will paſſionately tranſport the Damned with Self-Indignation! " Muſt I tire out the Pati-
" ence of Chriſt? Muſt I make the God of
" Heaven follow me in vain, till I had wearied
" him with crying to me, *repent, return?* O
" how juſtly is that Patience now turned in-
" to Fury, which falls upon me with irreſiſ-
" tible Violence? When the Lord cried to me,
" *Wilt thou not be made clean? When ſhall it*
" *once be?* my Heart, or at leaſt my Practice,
" anſwered, *Never.* And now when I cry,
" How long ſhall it be till I am freed from this
" Torment? How juſtly do I receive the ſame
" Anſwer, *Never, Never.*"

§ 15.——It will alſo be moſt cutting to *remember on what eaſy Terms they might have eſcaped their Miſery.* Their Work was not to remove Mountains, nor conquer Kingdoms, nor fulfill the Law to the ſmalleſt Tittle, nor ſatisfy Juſtice for all their Tranſgreſſions. *The Yoke was eaſy, and the Burthen light*, which Chriſt would have laid upon them. It was but to repent, and cordially accept him for their Saviour; to renounce all other Happineſs, and take the Lord for their ſupreme Good; to renounce the World and the Fleſh, and ſubmit to his meek and gracious Government; and to

forſake the Ways of their own deviſing, and walk in his holy delightful Way. " Ah," thinks the poor tormented Wretch, " how juſtly do " I ſuffer all this, who would not be at ſo " ſmall Pains to avoid it? Where was my " Underſtanding, when I neglected that gra- " cious Offer; when I called *the Lord an hard* " *Maſter*, and thought His pleaſant Service a " Bondage, and the Service of the Devil and " the Fleſh the only Freedom? Was I not a " thouſand Times worſe than mad, when I " cenſured the holy Way of God as needleſs " Preciſeneſs; when I thought the Laws of " Chriſt too ſtrict, and all too much that I did " for the Life to come? What would all Suf- " ferings for Chriſt and Well-doing have been, " compared with theſe Sufferings that I muſt " undergo for ever? Would not the Heaven " which I have loſt, have recompenced all my " Loſſes? And ſhould not all my Sufferings " have been there forgotten? What if Chriſt " had bid me do ſome great Matter; whether " to live in continual Fears and Sorrows, or to " ſuffer Death an hundred Times over; ſhould " I not have done it? How much more, when " he only ſaid? *Believe, and be ſaved. Seek my* " *Face, and thy Soul ſhall live. Take up thy* " *Croſs, and follow me, and I will give thee* " *everlaſting Life.* O gracious Offer! O eaſy " Terms! O curſed Wretch, that would not " be perſuaded to accept them!"

§ 16.

§ 16.—THIS alſo will be a moſt tormenting Conſideration, *to remember what they ſold their eternal Welfare for.* When they compare the Value of the Pleaſures of Sin, with the Value of *the Recompence of Reward*, how will the vaſt Diſproportion aſtoniſh them? To think of the low Delights of the Fleſh, or the applauding Breath of Mortals, or the poſſeſſing Heaps of Gold; and then to think of everlaſting Glory. "This is all I had for my Soul, my God, my "Hopes of Bleſſedneſs!" It cannot poſſibly be expreſſed, how theſe Thoughts will tear his very Heart. Then will he exclaim againſt his Folly; "O miſerable Wretch! Did I ſet my "Soul to Sale for ſo baſe a Price? Did I part "with my God for a little Dirt and Droſs; and "ſell my Saviour, as *Judas*, for a little Silver? "I had but a Dream of Delight, for my Hopes "of Heaven; and *now* I am awaked, it is all "vaniſhed. My Morſels are now turned to "Gall, and my Cups to Wormwood. When "they were paſt my Taſte, the Pleaſure "periſhed. And is this all that I have had "for the ineſtimable Treaſure? What a bad "Exchange did I make? What if I had gai-"ned all the World, and loſt my Soul? But, "alas! how ſmall a Part of the World was it, "for which I gave up my Part in Glory?" O that Sinners would think of this, when they are ſwimming in the Delights of the Fleſh, and ſtudying how to be rich and honourable in the World! When they are deſperately ven-

turing upon known Tranſgreſſion, and ſinning againſt the Checks of Conſcience.

§ 17.——It will add yet more to their Torment, *when they conſider that they moſt wilfully procured their own Deſtruction.* Had they been forced to ſin, it would much abate the Rage of their Conſciences; or if they were puniſhed for another Man's Tranſgreſſions; or any other had been the chief Author of their Ruin. But to think, it was the Choice of their own Will, and that none in the World could have forced them to ſin againſt their Wills; this will be a cutting Thought. "Had I not Enemies enough "in the World, (thinks this miſerable Crea-"ture) but I muſt be an Enemy to my-"ſelf? God would never give the Devil, "nor the World ſo much Power over me, "as to *force* me to commit the leaſt Tranſ-"greſſion. They could but *entice*, it was "*myſelf* that yielded, and did the Evil. And "muſt I lay Hands upon my own Soul; "and imbrue my Hands in my own Blood? "Never had I ſo great an Enemy as my-"ſelf. Never did God offer any Good to "my Soul, but I reſiſted him. He hath "heaped Mercy upon me, and renewed one "Deliverance after another, to draw my "Heart to him; yea, he hath gently chaſ-"tiſed me, and made me groan under the "Fruit of my Diſobedience; and tho' I pro-"miſed largely in my Affliction, yet never

"was

" was I heartily willing to ſerve him." Thus will it gnaw the Hearts of theſe Sinners, to remember that they were the Cauſe of their own Undoing; and that they wilfully and obſtinately perſiſted in their Rebellion, and were mere Volunteers in the Service of the Devil.

§ 8.——The Wound in their Conſciences will be yet deeper, *when they ſhall* not only *remember* it was their own doing, but *that they were at ſo much Coſt and Pains for their own Damnation.* What great Undertakings did they engage in to affect their Ruin; to reſiſt the Spirit of God; to overcome the Power of Mercies, Judgments, and even the Word of God; to ſubdue the Power of Reaſon, and ſilence Conſcience? All this they undertook, and performed. Tho' they walked in continual Danger of the Wrath of God, and knew he could lay them in the Duſt, and caſt them into Hell, in a Moment; yet would they run upon all this. O the Labour it coſts Sinners to be damned! Sobriety with Health and Eaſe, they might have had at a cheaper Rate; yet they will rather have Gluttony and Drunkenneſs, with Poverty, Shame, and Sickneſs. Contentment they might have, with Eaſe and Delight; yet they will rather have Covetouſneſs and Ambition, tho' it coſt them Cares and Fears, Labour of Body, and Diſtraction of Mind. Tho' their Anger be Self-Torment, and Re-

venge and Envy conſume their Spirits; tho' Uncleanneſs deſtroy their Bodies, Eſtates, and good Names; yet will they do and ſuffer all this, rather than ſuffer their Souls to be ſaved. With what Rage will they lament their Folly and ſay, "Was Damnation worth all "my Coſt and Pains? Might I not have been "damned on free Coſt, but I muſt purchaſe it ſo dearly? I thought I could have "been ſaved without ſo much ado? and "could I not have been deſtroyed without "ſo much ado? Muſt I ſo laborioufly work "out my own Damnation, when God commanded me to *work out my Salvation?* If "I had done as much for Heaven, as I "did for Hell, I had ſurely had it. I cried out of the tedious Way of Godlineſs, "and the painful Courſe of Self-Denial; and "yet I could be at a great deal more Pains "for Satan, and for Death. Had I loved "Chriſt as ſtrongly as I did my Pleaſures, "and Profits, and Honours, and thought "on him as often, and ſought him as painfully, O how happy had I now been! "but juſtly do I ſuffer the Flames of Hell, "for buying them ſo dear, rather than have "Heaven when it was purchaſed to my "Hands!"

§ 19. O THAT God would perſuade thee, *Reader*, to take up theſe Thoughts *now*, for preventing the unconceivable Calamity of taking

king them up in Hell as thy own Tormentor! Say not, that they are only imaginary: Read what *Dives* thought, *being in Torments* (d). As the Joys of Heaven are chiefly enjoyed by the rational Soul in its rational Actings, ſo muſt the Pains of Hell be ſuffered. As they will be Men ſtill, ſo will they feel and act as Men.

(d) Luke xvi.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

The Miſery of thoſe, who, beſides loſing the Saints Reſt, loſe the Enjoyments of Time, and ſuffer the Torments of Hell.

§ 1. *The Connection of this with the preceding Chapter.* § 2. (I) *The Enjoyments of Time which the Damned loſe:* § 3. (1) *Their preſumptuous Belief of their Intereſt in God and Chriſt:* § 4. (2) *All their Hopes:* § 5. (3) *All their Peace of Conſcience:* § 6. (4) *All their carnal Mirth:* § 7. (5) *All their ſenſual Delights.* § 8. (II) *The Torments of the Damned are exceeding great:* § 9. (1) *The principal Author of them is God himſelf:* § 10. (2) *The Place or State of Torment:* § 11. (3) *Theſe Torments are the Effects of divine Vengeance:* § 12. (4) *God will take Pleaſure in executing them:* § 13. (5) *Satan and Sinners themſelves will be God's Executioners:* § 14. (6) *Theſe Torments will be univerſal;* § 15. (7) *without any Mitigation;* § 16. (8) *and eternal.* § 17. *The obſtinate Sinner convinced of his Folly in venturing on theſe Torments;* § 18. *and intreated to fly for Safety to Chriſt.*

§ 1.

§ 1. AS *Godlineſs hath a Promiſe of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come*; and if we *ſeek firſt the Kingdom of God, and his Righteouſneſs*, then *all* meaner *Things ſhall be added unto us*: So alſo are the Ungodly threatened with the Loſs both of ſpiritual and temporal Bleſſings; and becauſe they ſought not firſt God's Kingdom and Righteouſneſs, therefore ſhall they loſe both it and that which they did ſeek, and there *ſhall be taken from them that* little *which they have*. If they could but have kept their preſent Enjoyments, they would not have much cared for the Loſs of Heaven. If they had *loſt and forſaken all for Chriſt*, they would have found all again in him: for he would have been *All* in *All* to them. But now they have forſook Chriſt for other Things, they ſhall loſe Chriſt, and that alſo for which they forſook him; even——*the Enjoyments of Time*——beſides *ſuffering the Torments of Hell*.

§ 2. (1) AMONG *the Enjoyments of Time*, they ſhall particularly loſe——*their preſumptuous Belief of their Intereſt in the Favour of God, and the Merits of Chriſt*;——*all their Hopes*;——*all their falſe Peace of Conſcience*;——*all their carnal Mirth*;—— and *all their ſenſual Delights*.

§ 3. (1) *They ſhall loſe their preſumptuous Belief of their Intereſt in the Favour of God, and the Merits of Chriſt*. This falſe Belief *now* ſupports their Spirits, and defends them from the Terrors

rors that would otherwise seize upon them. But what will ease their Trouble, when they can believe no longer, nor rejoyce any longer? If a Man be near to the greatest Mischief, and yet strongly conceit that he is in Safety, he may be as chearful as if all were well. If there were no more to make a Man happy, but to believe that he is so, or shall be so, Happiness would be far more common than it is like to be. As true Faith is the leading Grace in the Regenerate, so is false Faith the leading Vice in the Unregenerate. Why do such Multitudes sit still, when they might have Pardon, but that they verily think they are pardoned already? If you could ask thousands in Hell, what Madness brought them thither? they would most of them answer, "We made sure of being saved, till we "found ourselves damned. We would have "been more earnest Seekers of Regeneration, "and the Power of Godliness, but we verily "thought we were Christians before. We have "flattered ourselves into these Torments, and "now there is no Remedy." *Reader*, I must in Faithfulness tell thee, that the confident Belief of their good State, which the careless, unholy, unhumbled Multitude so commonly boast of, will prove in the End but a Soul-damning Delusion. There is none of *this Believing* in Hell. It was Satan's Stratagem, that being *blindfold* they might follow him the more *boldly*; but *then* he will uncover their Eyes, and they shall see where they are.

§ 4.

§ 4. (2) *They ſhall loſe alſo all their Hopes.* In this Life, though they were threatened with the Wrath of God, yet their Hope of eſcaping it bore up their Hearts. We can now ſcarce ſpeak with the vileſt Drunkard, or Swearer, or Scoffer, but he hopes to be ſaved for all this. O happy World, if Salvation were as common as this Hope! Nay, ſo ſtrong are Men's Hopes, that they will diſpute the Cauſe with Chriſt himſelf at Judgment, and plead their *having eat and drank in his Preſence, and propheſied in his Name, and in his Name caſt out Devils*; they will ſtifly deny that ever they neglected Chriſt in *Hunger*, *Nakedneſs*, or *Priſon*, till he confutes them with the Sentence of their Condemnation. O the ſad State of theſe Men, when they muſt bid farewell to all their Hopes! *When a wicked Man dieth, his Expectation ſhall periſh*; *and the Hope of unjuſt Men periſheth* (a). *The Eyes of the Wicked ſhall fail, and they ſhall not eſcape, and their Hope ſhall be as the giving up of the Ghoſt* (b). The giving-up the Ghoſt, is a fit, but terrible Reſemblance of a wicked Man's giving up his Hopes. As the Soul departeth not from the Body without the greateſt Pain; ſo doth the Hope of the wicked depart. The Soul departs from the Body ſuddenly, in a Moment, which hath there delightfully continued ſo many Years; juſt ſo doth the Hope of the Wicked depart. The Soul will never more return to live with the Body in this World; and the Hope

(a) Prov. xi. 7. (b) Job xi. 20.

Hope of the Wicked takes an everlaſting farewell of his Soul. A Miracle of Reſurrection ſhall again unite Soul and Body, but there ſhall be no ſuch miraculous Reſurrection of the Damned's Hope. Methinks it is the moſt pitiable Sight this World affords, to ſee ſuch an ungodly Perſon dying, and to think of his Soul and his Hopes departing together. With what a ſad Change he appears in another World! Then if a Man could but ask that hopeleſs Soul, "Are "you as confident of Salvation as you were wont "to be?" What a ſad Anſwer would be returned! O that careleſs Sinners would be awakened to think of this in Time! *Reader*, reſt not till thou canſt give a Reaſon of all thy Hopes, grounded upon Scripture-Promiſes; that they purify thy Heart; that they quicken thy Endeavours in Godlineſs; that the more thou hopeſt the leſs thou ſinneſt, and the more exact is thy Obedience. If thy Hopes be ſuch as theſe, go on in the Strength of the Lord, hold faſt thy Hope, and *never ſhall it make thee aſhamed.* But if thou haſt not one ſound Evidence of a Work of Grace on thy Soul, caſt away thy Hopes. Deſpair of ever being ſaved, *except thou be born again*; or of *ſeeing God, without Holineſs*; or of having Part in Chriſt, except thou *love him above Father, Mother, or thy own Life.* This kind of Deſpair is one of the firſt Steps to Heaven. If a Man be quite out of his Way, what muſt be the firſt Means to bring him in again? He muſt

deſpair

deſpair of ever coming to his Journey's End in the Way that he is in: If his Home be eaſtward, and he is going weſtward, as long as he hopes he is right, he will go on; and as long as he goes on hoping, he goes farther amiſs: When he deſpairs of coming home, except he turn back, then he will return, and then he may hope. Juſt ſo it is, *Sinner*, with thy Soul: Thou art born out of the Way to Heaven, and haſt proceeded many a Year; thou goeſt on, and hopeſt to be ſaved, becauſe thou art not ſo bad as many others. Except thou throweſt away thoſe Hopes, and ſee that thou haſt all this while been quite out of the Way to Heaven, thou wilt never return and be ſaved. There is nothing in the World more likely to keep thy Soul out of Heaven, than thy falſe Hopes of being ſaved, while thou art out of the Way to Salvation. See then how it will aggravate the Miſery of the Damned, that, with the Loſs of Heaven, they ſhall loſe all *that* Hope of it, which now ſupports them.

§ 5. (3) *They will loſe all that falſe Peace of Conſcience which makes their preſent Life ſo eaſy.* Who would think, that ſees how quietly the Multitude of the Ungodly live, that they muſt very ſhortly lie down in everlaſting Flames? They are as free from the Fears of Hell as an obedient Believer; and for the moſt Part have leſs Diſquiet of Mind than thoſe who ſhall be ſaved. Happy Men, if this Peace would prove laſting! *When they ſhall ſay, Peace and Safety;*

then

then ſudden Deſtruction cometh upon them, as Travail upon a Woman with Child, and they ſhall not eſcape (c). O cruel Peace, which ends in ſuch a War! The Soul of every Man by Nature is Satan's Garriſon; all is at Peace in ſuch a Man till Chriſt comes, and gives it terrible Alarms of Judgment and Hell, batters it with the Ordnance of his Threats and Terrors, forces it to yield to his mere Mercy, and take him for the Governor; then doth he caſt out Satan, *overcome him, take from him all his Armour wherein he truſted and divideth his Spoils* (d), and then doth he eſtabliſh a firm and laſting Peace. If therefore thou art yet in that *firſt* Peace, never think it will endure. Can thy Soul have laſting Peace, in Enmity with Chriſt? Can he have Peace againſt whom God proclaims War? I wiſh thee no greater Good, than that God break in upon thy careleſs Heart, and ſhake thee out of thy falſe Peace, and make thee lie down at the Feet of Chriſt, and ſay, *Lord, what wouldſt thou have me to do?* and ſo receive from him a better and ſurer Peace, which will never be quite broken, but be the Beginning of thy everlaſting Peace, and not periſh in thy periſhing, as the groundleſs Peace of the World will do.

§ 6. (4) *They ſhall loſe all their carnal Mirth.* They will themſelves ſay of their *Laughter, it is mad; and of* their *Mirth, what doth it* (e)? It was but *as the Crackling of Thorns under a Pot*

(c) 1 Theſ. v. 3. (d) Luke xi. 22. (e) Eccleſ. ii. 2.

Pot (f). It made a Blaze for a while, but it was preſently gone, and returned no more. The Talk of Death and Judgment was irkſome to them, becauſe it damped their Mirth. They could not endure to think of their Sin and Danger, becauſe theſe Thoughts ſunk their Spirits. They knew not what it was to weep for Sin, or to humble themſelves under the mighty Hand of God. They could laugh away Sorrow, and ſing away Cares, and drive away thoſe melancholy Thoughts. To meditate, and pray, they fancied would be enough to make them miſerable or run mad. Poor Souls! what a Miſery will that Life be, where you ſhall have nothing but Sorrow; intenſe, Heart-piercing, multiplied Sorrow; when you ſhall neither have the Joys of Saints, nor your own former Joys? Do you think there is one merry Heart in Hell; or one joyful Countenance, or jeſting Tongue? You now cry, *a little Mirth is worth a great deal of Sorrow.* But, ſurely, a little *godly Sorrow*, which would have ended in eternal Joy, had been worth much more than all your fooliſh Mirth; for the End of ſuch Mirth is Sorrow.

§ 7. (5) *They ſhall alſo loſe all their ſenſual Delights.* That which they eſteemed their chief Good, their Heaven, their God, muſt they loſe, as well as God himſelf. What a Fall will the proud ambitious Man have from the Top of his Honours? As his Duſt and Bones

(f) Eccles. vii. 6.

will not be known from the Duſt and Bones of the pooreſt Beggar; ſo neither will his Soul be honoured or favoured more than theirs. What a Number of the Great, Noble, and Learned, will be ſhut out of the Preſence of Chriſt? They ſhall not find their magnificent Buildings, ſoft Beds, and eaſy Couches. They ſhall not view their curious Gardens, their pleaſant Meadows, and plenteous Harveſts. Their Tables will not be ſo furniſhed, nor attended. The *rich Man is* there no more *cloathed in Purple and fine Linen*, nor *fareth ſumptuouſly every Day. There* is no expecting the Admiration of Beholders. They ſhall ſpend their Time in Sadneſs, and not in Sports and Paſtimes. What an Alteration will they *then* find? The Heat of their Luſt will be then abated. How will it even cut them to the Heart to look each other in the Face? What an Interview will there then be, curſing the Day that ever they ſaw one another? O that Sinners would now remember, and ſay, "Will theſe Delights accompany us into the "other World? Will not the Remembrance "of them be then our Torment? Shall we "then take this Partnerſhip in Vice for true "Friendſhip? Why ſhould we ſell ſuch laſ-"ting, incomprehenſible Joys for a Taſte of "ſeeming Pleaſure? Come, as we have ſinned "together, let us pray together, that God would "pardon us; and let us help one another to-"wards Heaven, inſtead of helping to deceive "and deſtroy each other." O that Men knew

but

but what they deſire, when they would ſo fain have all Things ſuited to the Deſires of the Fleſh! It is but to deſire their Temptations to be increaſed, and their Snares ſtrengthened.

§ 8. (II) As the Loſs of the Saints Reſt will be aggravated by loſing the Enjoyments of Time, *it will be much more ſo by ſuffering the Torments of Hell.* The exceeding Greatneſs of ſuch Torments may appear by conſidering,——*the principal Author of them, which is God himſelf*;——*the Place or State of Torment*;——that *theſe Torments are the Fruit of divine Vengeance*;——that *the Almighty takes Pleaſure in them*;——that *Satan and Sinners themſelves ſhall be God's Executioners*;——that *theſe Torments ſhall be univerſal*,——*without Mitigation*,——and *without End.*

§ 9 (1) *The principal Author of Hell-Torments is God himſelf.* As it was no leſs than God whom the Sinner had offended, ſo it is no leſs than God who will puniſh them for their Offences. He hath prepared thoſe Torments for his Enemies. His continued Anger will ſtill be devouring them. His Breath of Indignation will kindle the Flames. His Wrath will be an intolerable Burthen to their Souls. If it were but a Creature they had to do with, they might better bear it. Woe to him that falls under the Strokes of the Almighty! *It is a fearful Thing to fall into the Hands of the living God* (g). It were nothing in Compariſon to this,

(g) Heb. x. 31.

this, if all the World were againſt them, or if the Strength of all Creatures were united in one to inflict their Penalty. They had now rather venture to diſpleaſe GOD than diſpleaſe a Landlord, a Cuſtomer, a Maſter, a Friend, a Neighbour, or their own Fleſh; but then they will wiſh a thouſand Times in vain, that they had been hated of all the World, rather than have loſt the Favour of God. What a conſuming Fire is *his Wrath?* If it *be kindled* here *but a little*, how do we *wither like the Graſs?* How ſoon doth our Strength decay, and turn to Weakneſs, and our Beauty to Deformity? The Flames do not ſo eaſily run through the dry Stubble, as the Wrath of God will conſume theſe Wretches. They that could not bear a Priſon, or a Gibbet, or Fire for Chriſt, nor ſcarce a few Scoffs, how will they now bear the devouring Flames of divine Wrath?

§ 10. (2) *The Place or State of Torment is purpoſely ordained to glorify the Juſtice of God.* When God would glorify his Power, he made the Worlds. The comely Order of all his Creatures, declareth his Wiſdom. His Providence is ſhewn, in ſuſtaining all Things. When a Spark of his Wrath kindles upon the Earth, the whole World, except only eight Perſons, are drowned; *Sodom*, *Gomorrah*, *Admah*, and *Zeboim*, are burnt with Fire from Heaven; the Sea ſhuts her Mouth upon ſome; the Earth opens and ſwallows up others; the Peſtilence deſtroys by thouſands. What a ſtanding Wit-

neſs

neſs of the Wrath of God, is the preſent deplorable State of the Jews? Yet the glorifying the Mercy and Juſtice of God, is intended moſt eminently for the Life to come. As God will then glorify his Mercy in a Way that is now beyond the Comprehenſion of the Saints that muſt enjoy it; ſo alſo will he manifeſt his Juſtice to be indeed the Juſtice of God. The everlaſting Flames of Hell will not be thought too hot for the Rebellious; and when they have there burned through Millions of Ages, he will not repent him of the Evil which is befallen them. Woe to the Soul that is thus ſet up as a Butt, for the Wrath of the Almighty to ſhoot at! and as a Buſh that muſt burn in the Flames of his Jealouſy, and never be conſumed!

§ 11. (3) *The Torments of the Damned muſt be extreme, becauſe they are the Effects of divine Vengeance.* Wrath is terrible, but Revenge is implacable. *When* the great God ſhall ſay, "My rebellious Creatures ſhall now pay for all "the Abuſe of my Patience. Remember how "I waited your Leiſure in vain, how I ſtooped "to perſuade and intreat you. Did you think "I would always be ſo ſlighted?" *Then* will he be revenged for every abuſed Mercy, and for all their Neglects of Chriſt and Grace. O that Men would foreſee this, and pleaſe God better in preventing their Woe!

§ 12. (4) *Conſider alſo, that though God had rather Men would accept of Chriſt and Mercy, yet when they perſiſt in Rebellion, he will take*

Pleaſure in their Execution. He tells us, *Fury is not in me*, yet he adds, *who would ſet the Briars and Thorns againſt me in Battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together.* Wretched Creatures! when *he that made them will not have Mercy upon them, and he that formed them will ſhew them no Favour* (h). *As the Lord rejoiced over them to do them Good; ſo the Lord will rejoice over them to deſtroy them, and to bring them to nought* (i). Woe to the Soul whom God rejoiceth to puniſh! *He will laugh at their Calamity, he will mock when their Fear cometh; when their Fear cometh as Deſolation and their Deſtruction cometh as a Whirlwind; when Diſtreſs and Anguiſh cometh upon them* (k). Terrible Thing, when none in Heaven or Earth can help them but God, and he ſhall rejoice in their Calamity! Tho' Scripture ſpeaks of *God's laughing and mocking*, not literally, but after the manner of Men; yet it is ſuch an Act of God in tormenting the Sinner, which cannot otherwiſe be more fitly expreſſed.

§ 13. (5) *Conſider that Satan and themſelves ſhall be God's Executioners.* He that was here ſo ſucceſsful in drawing them from Chriſt, will then be the Inſtrument of their Puniſhment, for yielding to his Temptations. That is the Reward he will give them for all their Service; for their rejecting the Commands of God, and forſaking Chriſt, and neglecting their Souls at his

(h) Iſa. xxvii. 4, 11. (i) Deut. xxviii. 63.
(k) Prov. i. 26, 27.

his Perſuaſion. If they had ſerved Chriſt as faithfully as they did Satan, he would have given them a better Reward.——It is alſo moſt juſt, that they ſhould be their own Tormentors, that they may ſee their whole Deſtruction is of themſelves; and then who can they complain of but themſelves?

§ 14. (6) *Conſider alſo that their Torment will be univerſal.* As all Parts have joined in Sin, ſo muſt they all partake in the Torment. The *Soul*, as it was the chief in ſinning, ſhall be the chief in ſuffering; and as it is of a more excellent Nature than the Body, ſo will its Torments far exceed bodily Torments; and as its Joys far ſurpaſs all ſenſual Pleaſures, ſo the Pains of the Soul exceed corporal Pains.——It is not only a Soul, but a *ſinful Soul*, that muſt ſuffer. Fire will not burn except the Fuel be combuſtible; but if the Wood be dry, how fiercely will it burn? The Guilt of their Sins will be to damned Souls like Tinder to Gun-Powder, to make the Flames of Hell take hold upon them with Fury.——The *Body* muſt alſo bear its Part. That Body which was ſo carefully looked to, ſo tenderly cheriſhed, ſo curiouſly dreſſed; what muſt it now endure? How are its haughty Looks now taken down? How little did thoſe Flames regard its Comelineſs and Beauty? Thoſe Eyes which were wont to be delighted with curious Sights, muſt then ſee nothing but what ſhall terrify them; an angry God above them, with thoſe Saints whom they ſcorned, enjoy-

ing the Glory which they have loſt; and about them will be only Devils and damned Souls. How will they look back, and ſay, "Are all "our Feaſts, and Games, and Revels, come "to this?" Thoſe Ears which were accuſtomed to Muſick and Songs, ſhall hear the Shrieks and Cries of their damned Companions; Children crying out againſt their Parents, that gave them Encouragement and Example in Evil; Husbands and Wives, Maſters and Servants, Miniſters and People, Magiſtrates and Subjects, charging their Miſery upon one another, for diſcouraging in Duty, conniving at Sin, and being ſilent, when they ſhould have plainly foretold the Danger. Thus will Soul and Body be Companions in Woe.

§ 15. (7) *Far greater will theſe Torments be, becauſe without Mitigation.* In this Life, when told of Hell or Conſcience troubled their Peace, they had Comforters at Hand; their carnal Friends, their Buſineſs, their Company, their Mirth. They could drink, play, or ſleep away their Sorrows. But now all theſe Remedies are vaniſhed. Their hard, preſumptuous, unbelieving Heart was a Wall to defend them againſt Trouble of Mind. Satan was himſelf their Comforter, as he was to our firſt Mother; "*Hath God ſaid, ye ſhall not eat?*——*ye ſhall* "*not ſurely die.* Doth God tell you that you "ſhall lie in Hell? It is no ſuch Matter. God "is more merciful. Or if there be a Hell, what "need you fear it? Are not you Chriſtians?

"Was

" Was not the Blood of Chriſt ſhed for you?" Thus as the Spirit of Chriſt is the Comforter of the Saints, ſo Satan is the Comforter of the Wicked. Never was a Thief more careful leſt he ſhould awaken the People, when he is robbing the Houſe, than Satan is not to awaken a Sinner. But when the Sinner is dead, then Satan hath done flattering and comforting. Which Way then will the forlorn Sinner look for Comfort? They that drew him into the Snare, and promiſed him Safety, now forſake him, and are forſaken themſelves. His Comforts are gone, and the righteous God, whoſe Fore-Warnings he made light of, will now make good his Word againſt him to the leaſt Tittle.

§ 16. (8) *But the greateſt Aggravation of theſe Torments will be their Eternity.* When a thouſand Million of Ages are paſt, they are as freſh to begin as the firſt Day. If there were any Hope of an End, it would eaſe the Damned to foreſee it; but *for ever*, is an intolerable Thought. They were never weary of ſinning, nor will God be weary of plaguing. They never heartily repented of Sin, nor will God repent of their Suffering. They broke the Laws of the eternal God, and therefore ſhall ſuffer eternal Puniſhment. They knew it was an everlaſting Kingdom which they refuſed, and what Wonder if they are everlaſtingly ſhut out of it? Their immortal Souls were guilty of the Treſpaſs, and therefore muſt immortally ſuffer the

the Pains. What happy Men would they think themselves, if they might have lain still in their Graves, or might but there lie down again! How will they call and cry, "O Death! "whither art thou now gone? Now come, "and cut off this doleful Life. O that these "Pains would break my Heart, and end my "Being! O that I might once at last die! O "that I had never had a Being!" These Groans will the Thoughts of Eternity wring from their Hearts. They were wont to think Sermons and Prayers long; how long then will they think these endless Torments? What Difference is there betwixt the Length of their Pleasures and their Pains? The one continued but a Moment, the other endureth thro' all Eternity. *Sinner*, remember how Time is almost gone. Thou art standing at the Door of Eternity; and Death is waiting to open the Door, and put thee in. Go sleep out a few more Nights, and stir about a few more Days on Earth, and then thy Nights and Days shall end; thy Thoughts, and Cares, and Pleasures, shall all be devoured by Eternity; thou must enter upon the State which shall never be changed. As the Joys of Heaven are beyond our Conception, so are the Pains of Hell. Everlasting Torment is unconceivable Torment.

§ 17. But methinks I see the obstinate Sinner desperately resolving, "If I must be "damned, there is no Remedy; rather than "I will live as the Scripture requires, I will "put

" put it to the Venture; I ſhall eſcape as well " as the reſt of my Neighbours, and we will " even bear it as well as we can." Alas! *poor Creature*, let me beg this of thee, before thou doſt ſo flatly reſolve, that thou wouldſt lend me thy Attention to a few *Queſtions*, and weigh them with the Reaſon of a Man. —— *Who art thou, that thou ſhouldſt bear the Wrath of God?* Art thou a God, or a Man? What is thy Strength? Is it not as the Strength of Wax or Stubble to reſiſt the Fire; or as Chaff to the Wind; or as Duſt before the fierce Whirlwind? If thy Strength were as Iron, and thy Bones as Braſs; if thy Foundation were as the Earth, and thy Power as the Heavens; yet ſhouldſt thou periſh at the Breath of his Indignation. How much more when thou art but a Piece of breathing Clay, kept a few Days from being eaten with Worms, by the mere Support and Favour of him whom thou art thus reſiſting?——*Why doſt thou tremble at the Signs of Almighty Power and Wrath?* At Claps of Thunder; or Flaſhes of Lightning; or that unſeen Power which rends in Pieces the mighty Oaks, and tears down the ſtrongeſt Buildings; or at the Plague, when it rages around thee? If thou hadſt ſeen the Plagues of *Egypt*; or the Earth ſwallow up *Dathan* and *Abiram*; or *Elijah* bring Fire from Heaven to deſtroy the Captains and their Companies; would not any of theſe Sights have daunted thy Spirits? How then canſt thou bear the Plagues

of

of Hell?——*Why art thou diſmayed with ſuch ſmall Sufferings as befall thee here?* A Tooth-ach; a Fit of the Gout, or Stone; the Loſs of a Limb; or falling into Beggary and Diſgrace? And yet all theſe laid together, will be one Day accounted a happy State, in Compariſon of that which is ſuffered in Hell.——*Why does the Approach of Death ſo much affright thee?* O how cold it ſtrikes to thy Heart! And would not the Grave be accounted a Paradiſe, compared with the Place of Torment which thou ſlighteſt?——*Is it an intolerable Thing to burn Part of thy Body, by holding it in the Fire?* What then will it be to ſuffer ten thouſand Times more for ever in Hell?——*Why does the Thought or Mention of Hell occaſion any Diſquiet in thy Spirit?* And canſt thou endure the Torments themſelves?——*Why doth the rich Man complain to* Abraham *of his Torment in Hell?* Or thy dying Companions loſe their Courage, and change their haughty Language? Why cannot theſe make as light of Hell as thyſelf?——*Didſt thou never ſee or ſpeak with a Man under Deſpair?* How uncomfortable was his Talk? How burthenſome his Life? Nothing he poſſeſſed did him Good: He had no Sweetneſs in Meat or Drink: The Sight of Friends troubled him: He was weary of Life, and fearful of Death. If the Miſery of the Damned can be endured, why cannot a Man more eaſily endure theſe Foretaſtes

of

of Hell?——*What if thou ſhouldſt ſee the Devil appear to thee in ſome terrible Shape?* Would not thy Heart fail thee, and thy Hair ſtand an End? And how wilt thou endure to live for ever, where thou ſhalt have no other Company but Devils, and the Damned; and ſhalt not only ſee them, but be tormented with them and by them?——Let me once more ask, *If the Wrath of God be ſo light, why did the Son of God himſelf make ſo great a Matter of it?* It made Him *ſweat as it were great Drops of Blood falling down to the Ground.* The Lord of Life cried, *My Soul is exceeding ſorrowful even unto Death.* And on the Croſs, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* Surely if any one could have born theſe Sufferings eaſily, it would have been Jeſus Chriſt. He had another Meaſure of Strength to bear it than thou haſt. Woe to thee, *Sinner*, for thy mad Security! Doſt thou think to find it tolerable to thee, which was ſo heavy to Chriſt? Nay the Son of God is caſt into a bitter Agony, and bloody Sweat, only under *the Curſe of the Law*; and yet thou, *feeble, fooliſh Creature*, makeſt nothing to bear alſo *the Curſe of the Goſpel*, which requires a *much ſorer Puniſhment* (l). The good Lord bring thee to thy right Mind by Repentance, leſt thou buy thy Wit at too dear a Rate!

§ 18. And now, *Reader*, I demand thy Reſolution; what Uſe wilt thou make of all this? Shall

(l) Heb. x. 29.

Shall it all be loſt to thee? or wilt thou conſider it in good Earneſt? Thou haſt caſt away many a Warning of God; wilt thou do ſo by this alſo? Take Heed, God will not always ſtand warning and threatening. The Hand of Revenge is lifted up, the Blow is coming, and Woe to him on whom it lighteth! Doſt thou throw away the *Book*, and ſay, *it ſpeaks of nothing but Hell and Damnation?* Thus thou uſeſt alſo to complain of the *Preacher*. But wouldſt thou not have us tell thee of theſe Things? Should we be guilty of the Blood of thy Soul, by keeping ſilent that which God hath charged us to make known? Wouldſt thou periſh in Eaſe and Silence, and have us to periſh with thee, rather than diſpleaſe thee by ſpeaking the Truth? If thou wilt be guilty of ſuch inhuman Cruelty, God forbid we ſhould be guilty of ſuch ſcottiſh Folly. This Kind of *Preaching* or *Writing* is the ready Way to be hated; and the Deſire of Applauſe is ſo natural, that few delight in ſuch a diſpleaſing Way. But conſider, Are theſe Things true, or are they not? If they were not true, I would heartily join with thee againſt any that fright People without a Cauſe. But if theſe Threatenings be the Word of God, what a Wretch art thou, that wilt not hear it, and conſider it? If thou art one of the People of God, this Doctrine will be a Comfort to thee, and not a Terror. If thou art yet unregenerate, methinks thou ſhouldſt be as fearful to hear of Heaven,

Heaven, as of Hell, except the bare Name of Heaven or Salvation be ſufficient. Preaching Heaven and Mercy to thee, is intreating thee to ſeek them, and not reject them; and preaching Hell, is but to perſuade thee to avoid it. If thou wert quite paſt Hope of eſcaping it, then it were in vain to tell thee of Hell; but as long as thou art alive, there is Hope of thy Recovery, and therefore all Means muſt be uſed to awake thee from thy Lethargy. Alas! what Heart can now poſſibly conceive, or what Tongue expreſs, the Pains of thoſe Souls that are under the Wrath of God? Then, *Sinners*, you will be crying to Jeſus Chriſt, "O Mercy! O Pity, Pity on a poor Soul!" Why, I do now, in the Name of the Lord Jeſus, cry to thee, "O have Mercy, have "Pity, *Man*, upon thy own Soul!" Shall God pity thee, who wilt not be intreated to pity thyſelf? If thy Horſe ſee but a Pit before him, thou canſt ſcarcely force him in; and wilt thou ſo obſtinately caſt thyſelf into Hell, when the Danger is foretold thee? *Who can ſtand before the Indignation of the Lord? and who can abide in the Fierceneſs of his Anger* (m)? Methinks thou ſhouldſt need no more Words, but preſently caſt away thy Soul-damning Sins, and wholly deliver up thyſelf to Chriſt. Reſolve on it immediately, and let it be done, that I may ſee thy Face in Reſt among the Saints. May the Lord perſuade thy Heart to ſtrike

(m) Nahum. i. 6.

ſtrike this Covenant without any longer Delay! But if thou be hardened unto Death, and there be no Remedy, yet ſay not another Day but that thou waſt faithfully warned, and hadſt a Friend, that would fain have prevented thy Damnation.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

The Neceſſity of diligently ſeeking the Saints Reſt.

§ 1. *The Saints Reſt ſurpriſingly neglected*; *particularly*, § 2. *by the Worldly-minded*, § 3. *the profane Multitude*, § 4. *formal Profeſſors*, § 5—8. *and by the Godly themſelves, whether Magiſtrates, Miniſters, or People.* § 9. *The Author mourns the Neglect, and excites the Reader to Diligence by conſidering*, § 10. *The End we aim at, the Work we have to do, the Shortneſs and Uncertainty of our Time, and the Diligence of our Enemies*; § 11. *our Talents, Mercies, Relations to God, and our Afflictions*; § 12. *what Aſſiſtances we have, what Principles we profeſs, and our Certainty never to do enough*; § 13. *that every Grace tends to Diligence, that to triſle is loſt Labour, that much Time is miſpent, and that our Recompence and Labour will be proportionable*; § 14. *that ſtriving is the divine Appointment, all Men do or will approve it, the beſt Chriſtians at Death lament their Want of it, Heaven is often loſt for Want of it, but never obtained without it*; § 15. *God,*

Chriſt, and the Holy Spirit are in earneſt; God is ſo in hearing and anſwering Prayer, Miniſters in their Inſtructions and Exhortations, all the Creatures in ſerving us, Sinners in ſerving the Devil, as we were once, and now are, in worldly Things; and in Heaven and in Hell all are in earneſt. §. 16. *The Chapter concludes with propoſing ſome awakening Queſtions to the Ungodly, and* § 17. *alſo to the Godly.*

§ 1. IF there be ſo certain and glorious a Reſt for the Saints, why is there no more *induſtrious ſeeking after it?* One would think, if a Man did but once hear of ſuch unſpeakable Glory to be obtained, and believed what he heard to be true, he ſhould be tranſported with the Vehemency of his Deſire after it, and ſhould almoſt forget to eat and drink, and ſhould care for nothing elſe, and ſpeak of and enquire after nothing elſe, but how to get this Treaſure. And yet the People who hear of it daily, and profeſs to believe it as a fundamental Article of their Faith, do as little mind it, or labour for it, as if they had never heard of any ſuch Thing, or did not believe one Word they hear. This Reproof is more particularly applied to ——*the Worldly-minded*,——*the profane Multitude*,——*the formal Profeſſors*,——and even to *the Godly themſelves.*

§ 2. *The Worldly-minded* are ſo taken up in ſeeking the Things below, that they have neither Heart nor Time to ſeek *this Reſt. O fooliſh Sinners,*

Sinners, who hath bewitched you? The World bewitches Men into brute Beaſts, and draws them ſome Degrees beyond Madneſs. See what riding and running, what ſcrambling and catching for a Thing of nought, while eternal Reſt lies neglected! What contriving and caring to get a Step higher in the World than their Brethren, while they neglect the Kingly Dignity of the Saints! What inſatiable Purſuit of fleſhly Pleaſures, while they look on the Praiſes of God, the Joy of Angels, as a tireſome Burthen! What unwearied Diligence in raiſing their Poſterity, enlarging their Poſſeſſions; perhaps for a poor Living from Hand to Mouth; while Judgment is drawing near; but, how it ſhall go with them then, never puts them to one Hour's Conſideration! What riſing early, and ſitting up late, and labouring from Year to Year, to maintain themſelves and Children in Credit till they die, but, what ſhall follow after, they never think on! Yet theſe Men cry, "*may we not be ſaved without ſo much ado?*" How early do they rouze up their Servants to their Labour! But how ſeldom do they call them to Prayer, or reading the Scriptures! What hath this *World* done for its Lovers and Friends, that it is ſo eagerly followed, and painfully ſought after, while Chriſt and Heaven ſtand by, and few regard them? or what will the World do for them for the Time to come? The common Entrance into it is through Anguiſh and Sorrow. The Paſſage through it, is

with continual Care and Labour. The Paſſage out of it is the ſharpeſt of all. O *unreaſonable, bewitched Men!* Will Mirth and Pleaſure ſtick cloſe to you? Will Gold and worldly Glory prove faſt Friends to you in the Time of your greateſt Need? Will they hear your Cries in the Day of your Calamity? At the Hour of your Death, will they either anſwer or relieve you? Will they go along with you to the other World, and bribe the Judge, and bring you off clear, or purchaſe you a Place among the Bleſſed? Why then did the rich Man want *a Drop of Water to cool his Tongue?* Or are the ſweet Morſels of preſent Delight and Honour of more Worth than eternal Reſt? And will they recompence the Loſs of that *enduring Treaſure?* Can there be the leaſt Hope of any of theſe? Ah vile deceitful World! how oft have we heard thy moſt faithful Servants at laſt complaining; "Oh, the World hath deceived me, and undone me! It flattered me in my Proſperity, but now it turns me off in my Neceſſity. If I had as faithfully ſerved Chriſt, as I have ſerved it, he would not have left me thus comfortleſs and hopeleſs." Thus they complain; and yet ſucceeding Sinners will take no Warning.

§ 3. As for *the profane Multitude*, they will not be perſuaded to be at ſo much Pains for Salvation, as to perform the common outward Duties of Religion. If they have the Goſpel preached in the Town where they dwell, it

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may be they will give the Hearing to it one Part of the Day, and ſtay at home the other; or if the Maſter come to the Congregation, yet Part of the Family muſt ſtay at home. If they want the plain and powerful preaching of the Goſpel, how few are there in a whole Town, who will travel a Mile or two to hear abroad; though they will go many Miles to the Market for Proviſion for their Bodies? They know the Scripture is the Law of God, by which they muſt be acquitted or condemned in Judgment; and that *the Man is bleſſed who delights in the Law of the Lord, and in his Law doth meditate Day and Night*; yet will they not be at Pains to read a Chapter once a Day. If they carry a Bible to Church, and neglect it all the Week, this is the moſt Uſe they make of it. Though they are commanded to *pray without ceaſing*, and to *pray alway*; yet they will neither pray conſtantly with their *Families*, nor in *Secret*. Though *Daniel* would rather be *caſt to the Lions*, than forbear *praying three Times a Day in his Houſe*, where his Enemies might hear him; yet theſe Men will rather venture to be an eternal Prey to *Satan*, *the roaring Lion*, than thus ſeek their own Safety. Or their cold and heartleſs Prayers invite God to a Denial: For among Men it is taken for granted, that he who asks but *ſlightly* and *ſeldom*, cares not much for what he asks. They judge themſelves unworthy of Heaven, who think it is not worth their more conſtant and earneſt Requeſts. If every Door

was marked, where Families do not Morning and Evening earneſtly ſeek the Lord in Prayer, that his *Wrath* might be *poured out upon* ſuch prayerleſs *Families*, our Towns would be as Places overthrown by the Plague, the People being dead within, and the Mark of Judgment without. I fear where one Houſe would eſcape, ten would be marked out for Death; and then they might teach their Doors to pray, *Lord have Mercy upon us*, becauſe the People would not pray themſelves. But eſpecially if we could ſee what Men do in their ſecret Chambers, how few would you find in a whole Town that ſpend one Quarter of an Hour, Morning and Night, in earneſt Supplication to God for their Souls? O how little do theſe Men ſet by eternal Reſt! Thus do they ſlothfully neglect all Endeavours for their own Welfare, except ſome publick Duty in the Congregation, which *Cuſtom* or *Credit* engages them to. Perſuade them to read *good Books*, learn the Grounds of Religion in their *Catechiſm*, and ſanctify the *Lord's Day* in Prayer, and Meditation, and hearing the Word, and forbearing all worldly Thoughts and Speeches; and what a tedious Life do they take this to be? As if they thought Heaven were not worth doing ſo much for.

§ 4. ANOTHER Sort are *formal Profeſſors*, who will be brought to any outward Duty, but to the inward Work of Religion they will never be perſuaded. They will preach, or hear, or

or read, or talk of Heaven, or pray in their Families, and take Part with the Perſons or Cauſes that are good, and deſire to be eſteemed among the Godly; but you can never bring them to the more ſpiritual Duties; as to be conſtant and fervent in ſecret Prayer and Meditation; conſcientious in Self-Examination; Heavenly-minded, and to watch over their Hearts, Words and Ways; to mortify the Fleſh, and not make Proviſion to fulfill its Luſts; to love and heartily forgive an Enemy, and prefer their Brethren before themſelves; to lay all they have, or do, at the Feet of Chriſt, and prize his Service and Favour before all; to prepare to die, and willingly leave all to go to Chriſt. Hypocrites will never be perſuaded to any of theſe.——If an *Hypocrite* entertains the Goſpel *with Joy*; it is only in the Surface of his Soul, he never gives *the Seed* any *Depth of Earth:* It changes his *Opinion*, but never melts and new moulds his Heart, nor ſets up Chriſt there in full Power and Authority. As his Religion lies moſt in Opinion, ſo does his chief Buſineſs and Converſation. He is uſually an ignorant, bold, conceited Dealer in Controverſies; rather than an humble Embracer of known Truth, with Love and Obedience. By his ſlighting the Judgments and Perſons of others, and ſeldom talking with Seriouſneſs and Humility of the great Things of Chriſt, he ſhews his Religion dwells in his Brain, and not in his Heart. The *Wind of Temptation carries him away* as a Feather, becauſe his *Heart* is not *eſtabliſhed*

with Chriſt and *Grace*. He never in private Converſation humbly bewails his Soul's Imperfections, or tenderly acknowledges his Unkindneſſes to Chriſt; but gathers his greateſt Comforts from his being of ſuch a Judgment or Party.——The like may be ſaid of the *worldly Hypocrite*, who choaks the Goſpel with the Thorns of worldly Cares and Deſires. He is convinced, that he muſt be religious, or he cannot be ſaved; and therefore he reads, and hears, and prays, and forſakes his former Company and Courſes; but he reſolves to keep his Hold of preſent Things. His Judgment may ſay, God is the chief Good; but his Heart and Affections never ſaid ſo. The World hath more of his Affections than God, and therefore is his God. Though he does not run after Opinions and Novelties, like the former, yet he will be of that Opinion which will beſt ſerve his *worldly Advantage*. And as one whoſe Spirits are enfeebled by ſome peſtilential Diſeaſe; ſo this Man's Spirits being poſſeſſed by the Plague of a worldly Diſpoſition, how feeble is he in ſecret Prayer! How ſuperficial in Examination and Meditation? How poor in Heart-Watchings! How nothing at all in loving and walking with God, rejoicing in him, or deſiring him. ——So that both theſe, and many other Sorts of Hypocrites, though they will go with you in the eaſy Outſide of Religion, yet will never be at the Pains of inward and ſpiritual Duties.

§ 5.

§ 5. And even *the Godly themſelves* are too lazy Seekers of their everlaſting Reſt. Alas! what a Diſproportion is there between our Light and Heat? our Profeſſion and Proſecution? Who makes that Haſte, as if it were for Heaven? How ſtill we ſtand? How idly we work? How we talk, and jeſt, and trifle away our Time? How deceitfully we perform the Work of God? How we hear, as if we heard not; and pray, as if we prayed not; and examine, and meditate, and reprove Sin, as if we did it not; and enjoy Chriſt, as if we enjoyed him not; as if we had learned to uſe the Things of Heaven, as the *Apoſtle* teacheth us to *uſe the Things of the World?* What a frozen Stupidity hath benumbed us! We are dying, and we know it, and yet we ſtir not; we are at the Door of eternal Happineſs, or Miſery, and yet we perceive it not; Death knocks, and we hear it not; God and Chriſt call and cry to us, "*To day, if ye will hear my Voice, harden* "*not your Hearts; work while it is Day, for* "*the Night cometh when none can work.* Now "ply your Buſineſs, labour for your Lives, lay "out all your Strength and Time; now or ne-"ver;" and yet we ſtir no more than if we were half aſleep. What haſte doth Death and Judgment make? How faſt do they come on? They are almoſt at us, and yet what little Haſte we make? Lord, what a ſenſeleſs, earthly, helliſh Thing is a hard Heart! Where is the Man that is in earneſt a *Chriſtian?* Methinks Men every

every where make but a Trifle of their eternal State. They look after it but a little by the bye; they do not make it the Buſineſs of their Lives. If I were not ſick myſelf of the ſame Diſeaſe, with what Tears ſhould I mix this Ink? With what Groans ſhould I expreſs theſe Complaints? And with what Heart-Grief ſhould I mourn over this univerſal Deadneſs?

§ 6.——Do *Magiſtrates* among us ſeriouſly perform their Work? Are they zealous for God? Do they build up his Houſe? Are they tender of his Honour? Do they ſecond the *Word?* And fly in the Face of Sin and Sinners, as the Diſturbers of our Peace, and the only Cauſe of all our Miſeries? Do they improve all their Power, Wealth, and Honour, and all their Influence, for the greateſt Advantage to the Kingdom of Chriſt, as Men that muſt ſhortly give an Account of their Stewardſhip?

§ 7.——How thin are thoſe *Miniſters* that are ſerious in their Work! Nay, how mightily do the very beſt fail in this! Do we cry out of Men's Diſobedience to the Goſpel *in the Demonſtration of the Spirit*, and deal with Sin as the deſtroying Fire in our Towns, and by Force pull Men out of it? Do we perſuade our People, as thoſe ſhould, that *know the Terrors of the Lord?* Do we preſs Chriſt, and Regeneration, and Faith, and Holineſs, believing that, without theſe, Men can never have Life? Do our Bowels yearn over the ignorant, careleſs, and obſtinate Multitude? When we look them

in

in the Face, do our Hearts melt over them, leſt we ſhould never ſee their Faces in Reſt? Do we, as *Paul*, *tell them weeping*, of their fleſhly and earthly Diſpoſition? *And teach them publickly, and from Houſe to Houſe, at all Seaſons, and with many Tears?* And do we intreat them, as for their Soul's Salvation? Or rather, do we not ſtudy to gain the Approbation of critical Hearers; as if a Miniſter's Buſineſs were of no more Weight but to tell a ſmooth Tale for an Hour, and look no more after the People till the next Sermon? Does not carnal Prudence controul our Fervour, and make our Diſcourſes lifeleſs, on Subjects the moſt piercing? How gently we handle thoſe Sins, which will ſo cruelly handle our People's Souls? In a Word, our Want of Seriouſneſs about the Things of Heaven, charms the Souls of Men into Formality, and brings them to this cuſtomary, careleſs Hearing, which undoes them. May the Lord pardon the great Sin of the Miniſtry in this Thing; and in particular, my own!

§ 8. And are *the People* more ſerious than Magiſtrates or Miniſters? How can it be expected? *Reader*, look but to thyſelf, and reſolve the Queſtion. Ask Conſcience, and ſuffer it to tell thee truly. Haſt thou ſet thy eternal Reſt before thine Eyes, as the great Buſineſs thou haſt to do in this World? Haſt thou watched and laboured, with all thy Might, *that no Man take thy Crown?* Haſt thou made

Haſte,

Haſte, leſt thou ſhouldſt come too late, and die before thy Work be done? Haſt thou *preſſed* on through Crowds of Oppoſition *towards the Mark, for the Prize of the high Calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus*, ſtill *reaching forth unto thoſe Things which are before?* Can *Conſcience* witneſs your ſecret Cries, and Groans, and Tears? Can your *Family* witneſs, that you taught them the Fear of the Lord, and warned them not to *go to that Place of Torment?* Can your *Miniſter* witneſs, that he has heard you cry out, *What ſhall I do to be ſaved?* and that you have followed him with Complaints againſt your Corruptions, and with earneſt Enquiries after the Lord? Can your *Neighbours* about you witneſs, that you reprove the Ungodly, and take Pains to ſave the Souls of your Brethren? Let all theſe Witneſſes judge this Day between God and you, whether you are in earneſt about eternal Reſt. You can tell by his Work, whether your Servant has loitered, though you did not ſee him; ſo you may by looking at your own Work. Is your *Love* to Chriſt, your *Faith*, your *Zeal*, and other *Graces*, ſtrong or weak? What are your *Joys?* What is your *Aſſurance?* Is all in Order within you? Are you *ready to die*, if this ſhould be the Day? Do the *Souls*, among whom you have converſed, *bleſs you?* Judge by this, and it will quickly appear whether you have been Labourers or Loiterers.

§ 9. O Blessed Reſt, how unworthily art thou neglected! O glorious Kingdom, how art thou undervalued! Little know the careleſs Sons

Sons of Men, what a State they ſet ſo light by. If they once knew it, they would ſurely be of another Mind. I hope thou, *Reader*, art ſenſible, what a deſperate Thing it is to trifle about eternal Reſt; and how deeply thou haſt been guilty of this thyſelf. And I hope alſo, thou wilt not now ſuffer this Conviction to die. Should the Phyſician tell thee, *If you will obſerve but one Thing, I doubt not to cure your Diſeaſe*; wouldſt thou not obſerve it? So I tell thee, if thou wilt obſerve but this one Thing for thy Soul, I make no doubt of thy Salvation; ſhake off thy Sloth, and put-to all thy Strength, and be a *Chriſtian indeed*; I know not then what can hinder thy Happineſs. As far as thou art gone from God, ſeek him with all thy Heart, and no Doubt thou ſhalt find him. As unkind as thou haſt been to Jeſus Chriſt, ſeek him heartily, obey him unreſervedly, and thy Salvation is as ſure as if thou hadſt it already. But full as Chriſt's Satisfaction is, free as the Promiſe is, large as the Mercy of God is; if thou only talk of theſe, when thou ſhouldſt eagerly entertain them, thou wilt be never the better for them; and if thou loiter, when thou ſhouldſt labour, thou wilt loſe the Crown. Fall to Work then ſpeedily and ſeriouſly, and bleſs God that thou haſt yet Time to do it. And to ſhew that I urge thee not without Cauſe, I will here add *a Variety of animating Conſiderations*. Rouſe up thy Spirits, and, as *Moſes* ſaid to *Iſrael*, *ſet thy Heart unto all the Words which I teſtify unto thee this*

this Day; for it is not a vain Thing, becauſe it is your Life (a). May the Lord open thy Heart, and faſten his Counſel effectually upon thee!

§ 10. *Conſider how reaſonable it is, that our Diligence ſhould be anſwerable to the Ends we aim at, to the Work we have to do, to the Shortneſs and Uncertainty of our Time, and to the contrary Diligence of our Enemies.*——*The Ends of a Chriſtian's Deſires and Endeavours are* ſo *great*, that no human Underſtanding on Earth can comprehend them. What is ſo excellent, ſo important, or ſo neceſſary, as, the *glorifying of God, the Salvation of our own and other Men's Souls, by eſcaping the Torments of Hell, and poſſeſſing the Glory of Heaven?* And can a Man be too much affected with Things of ſuch Moment? Can he deſire them too earneſtly, or love them too ſtrongly, or labour for them too diligently? Don't we know, that if our Prayers prevail not, and our Labour ſucceeds not, we are undone for ever?——*The Work of a Chriſtian here is very great and various.* The *Soul* muſt be *renewed*; *Corruptions* muſt be *mortified*; *Cuſtom*, *Temptations*, and *worldly Intereſts*, muſt be *conquered*; *Fleſh* muſt be *ſubdued*; *Life*, *Friends*, and *Credit* muſt be *ſlighted*; *Conſcience* on good Grounds be *quieted*; and *Aſſurance* of Pardon and Salvation *attained*. Though God muſt give us theſe without our Merit, yet he will not give them without our earneſt

(a) Deut. xxxii. 46, 47.

earneſt Seeking and Labour. Beſides, there is much *Knowledge* to be *got*, many *Ordinances* to be *uſed*, and *Duties* to be *performed:* Every Age, Year, and Day; every Place we come to; every Perſon we deal with; every Change of our Condition, ſtill require the renewing of our Labour: Wives, Children, Servants, Neighbours, Friends, Enemies, all of them call for Duty from us. Judge then, whether Men that have ſo much Buſineſs lying upon their Hands, ſhould not exert themſelves; and whether it be their Wiſdom either to delay or loiter.—— *Time paſſeth on.* Yet a few Days, and we ſhall be here no more. Many Diſeaſes are ready to aſſault us. We that are now preaching, and hearing, and talking, and walking, muſt very ſhortly be carried, and laid in the Duſt, and there left to the Worms in Darkneſs and Corruption; we are almoſt there already; we know not whether we ſhall have another Sermon, or Sabbath, or Hour. How active ſhould they be, who know they have ſo ſhort a Space for ſo great a Work?——*And we have Enemies that are always plotting, and labouring for our Deſtruction.* How diligent is *Satan* in all Kind of Temptations! Therefore *be ſober, be vigilant; becauſe your Adverſary the Devil, as a roaring Lion walketh about, ſeeking whom he may devour. Whom reſiſt ſtedfaſt in the Faith* (b). How diligent are all the *Miniſters of Satan! Falſe Teachers, Scoffers, Perſecutors,* and our inbred *Cor-*

(b) 1 Pet. v. 8. 9.

Corruption, the moſt buſy and diligent of all! Will a feeble Reſiſtance ſerve our Turn? Should not we be more active for our own Preſervation, than our Enemies are for our Ruin?

§ 11. It ſhould excite us to Diligence, when we *conſider our Talents, and our Mercies, our Relation to God, and the Afflictions he lays upon us.*——*The Talents which we have received are many and great.* What People breathing on Earth have had plainer *Inſtructions*, or more forcible *Perſuaſions*, or more conſtant *Admonitions*, in Seaſon and out of Seaſon? *Sermons*, till we have been weary of them; and *Sabbaths*, till we profaned them? Excellent *Books* in ſuch Plenty, that we knew not which to read? What People have had God ſo near them? or have ſeen ſo much of Chriſt crucified before their Eyes? or have had Heaven and Hell ſo opened unto them? What ſpeed ſhould ſuch a People make for Heaven? How ſhould they fly that are thus winged? And how ſwiftly ſhould they ſail, that have Wind and Tide to help them? A ſmall Meaſure of Grace beſeems not ſuch a People, nor will an ordinary Diligence in the Work of God excuſe them.——*All our Lives have been filled with Mercies.* God hath mercifully poured out upon us the Riches of Sea and Land, of Heaven and Earth. We are fed, and cloathed with Mercy. We have Mercies within and without. To number them, is to count the Stars, or the Sands of the Sea-Shore. If there be any Difference betwixt

twixt Hell and Earth; yea, or Heaven and Earth; then certainly we have received Mercy. If the Blood of the Son of God be Mercy, then we are engaged to God by Mercy. Shall God think nothing too much, nor too good, for us, and ſhall we think all too much that we do for him? When I compare my ſlow and unprofitable Life, with the frequent and wonderful Mercies received, it ſhames me, it ſilences me, and leaves me inexcuſable.—— Beſides our Talents and Mercies, *our Relations to God are moſt endearing.* Are we his *Children*, and do we not owe him our moſt tender Affections, and dutiful Obedience? Are we *the Spouſe of Chriſt*, and ſhould we not obey and love him? *If he be a Father, where is his Honour? and if he be a Maſter, where is his Fear* (c)*? We call him Maſter, and Lord, and we ſay well* (d); But if our Induſtry be not anſwerable to our Relations, we condemn ourſelves in ſaying, we are his Children, or his Servants. How will the hard Labour, and daily Toil, which Servants undergo to pleaſe their Maſters, judge and condemn thoſe who will not labour ſo hard for their Great Maſter? Surely there is no Maſter like him; nor can any Servants expect ſuch Fruit of their Labours as his Servants.——And if we wander out of God's Way, or loiter in it, how *is every Creature ready to be his Rod, to reduce us, or put us on!* Our ſweeteſt Mercies will become our Sorrows.

(c) Mal. i. 6. (d) John xiii. 13.

Rather than want a Rod, the Lord will make us a Scourge to ourſelves: Our diſeaſed Bodies ſhall make us groan; our perplexed Minds ſhall make us reſtleſs; our Conſcience ſhall be as a Scorpion in our Boſom. And is it not eaſier to endure the Labour than the Spur? Had we rather be ſtill afflicted, than be up and doing? And though they that do moſt, meet alſo with Afflictions; yet ſurely, according to their Peace of Conſcience, and Faithfulneſs to Chriſt, the Bitterneſs of their Cup is abated.

§ 12. To quicken our Diligence in our Work, we ſhould alſo *conſider, what Aſſiſtances we have, what Principles we profeſs, and our Certainty that we can never do too much.*—— *For our Aſſiſtance in the Service of God, all the World are our Servants.* The Sun, Moon, and Stars, attend us with their Light and Influence. The Earth, with all its Furniture of Plants and Flowers, Fruits, Birds, and Beaſts; the Sea, with its Inhabitants; the Air, the Wind, the Froſt and Snow, the Heat and Fire, the Clouds and Rain, all wait upon us while we do our Work. Yea, *the Angels are all* our *miniſtring Spirits* (e). Nay more, the Patience of God doth wait upon us; the Lord Jeſus Chriſt waiteth, in the Offers of his Blood; the Holy Spirit waiteth, by ſtriving with our backward Hearts; beſides the Miniſters of the Goſpel, who ſtudy and wait, preach and wait, pray and wait, upon careleſs Sinners. And is it not

(e) Heb. i. 14.

not an intolerable Crime for us to trifle, while Angels and Men, yea, the Lord himſelf, ſtand by, and look on, and, as it were, hold us the Candle while we do nothing? I beſeech you, *Chriſtians*, whenever you are praying, or reproving Tranſgreſſors, or upon any Duty, remember what Aſſiſtances you have for your Work, and then judge how you ought to perform it.——*The Principles we profeſs*, are, that God is the chief Good; that all our Happineſs conſiſts in his Love, and therefore it ſhould be valued and ſought above all Things; that he is our only Lord, and therefore chiefly to be ſerved; that we muſt love him with all our Heart, and Soul, and Strength; that our great Buſineſs in the World is to glorify God, and obtain Salvation. Are theſe Doctrines ſeen in our Practice? Or rather do not our Works deny what our Words confeſs?——But however our Aſſiſtances and Principles excite us to our Work, *we are ſure we can never do too much.* Could we *do all, we are unprofitable Servants* (f); much more when we are ſure to fail in all. No Man can obey, or ſerve God too much. Though all Superſtition, or Service of our own deviſing, may be called a *being righteous overmuch*; yet as long as we keep to the Rule of the Word, we can never be righteous too much. The World is mad with Malice, when they think, that faithful Diligence in the Service of Chriſt is fooliſh Singularity. The Time is near

(f) Luke xvii. 10.

when they will eaſily confeſs, that God could not be loved, or ſerved too much, and that no Man can be too buſy to ſave his Soul. We may eaſily do too much for the World, but we cannot for God.

§ 13. LET us further *conſider, that it is the Nature of every Grace to promote Diligence, that trifling in the Way to Heaven is loſt Labour, that much precious Time is already miſpent, and that in Proportion to our Labour will be our Recompence.*——*See the Nature and Tendency of every Grace.* If you *loved God*, you would think nothing too much that you could poſſibly do to ſerve him, and pleaſe him ſtill more. Love is quick and impatient, active and obſervant. If you *loved Chriſt*, you would *keep his Commandments*, nor accuſe them of too much Strictneſs. If you had *Faith*, it would quicken and encourage you. If you had the *Hope of Glory*, it would, as the Spring in the Watch, ſet all the Wheels of your Souls a going. If you had the *Fear of God*, it would rouze you out of your Slothfulneſs. If you had *Zeal*, it would inflame, and *eat you up*. In what Degree ſoever thou art ſanctified, in the ſame Degree thou wilt be ſerious and laborious in the Work of God.——*But they that trifle, loſe their Labour*. Many, who, like *Agrippa*, are but *almoſt Chriſtians*, will find in the End they ſhall be but *almoſt ſaved*. If two be running in a Race, he that runs ſloweſt loſes both Prize and Labour. A Man that is lifting a Weight,

if

if he put not ſufficient Strength to it, had as good put none at all. How many Duties have Chriſtians loſt, for want of doing them thoroughly? *Many will ſeek to enter in, and ſhall not be able* (g), who, if they had *ſtriven*, might have been able. Therefore, put to a little more Diligence and Strength, that all you have done already be not in vain.——*Beſides, is not much precious Time already loſt?* With ſome of us Childhood and Youth are gone; with ſome, their middle Age alſo; and the Time before us is very uncertain. What Time have we ſlept, talked, and played away, or ſpent in worldly Thoughts and Cares? How little of our Work is done? The Time we have loſt cannot be recalled; ſhould we not then redeem and improve the little which remains? If a Traveller ſleep, or trifle moſt of the Day, he muſt travel ſo much faſter in the Evening, or fall ſhort of his Journey's End. ——*Doubt not but the Recompence will be according to your Labour.* The Seed which is buried and dead, will bring forth a plentiful Harveſt. Whatever you do, or ſuffer, *everlaſting Reſt* will pay for all. There is no repenting of Labours or Sufferings in Heaven. There not one ſays, "Would I had ſpared my "Pains, and prayed leſs, or been leſs ſtrict, "and done as the reſt of my Neighbours did." On the contrary, it will be their Joy to look back upon their Labours and Tribulations,

(g) Luke xiii. 24.

and to conſider how the mighty Power of God brought them through all. We may all ſay as *Paul, I reckon, that the Sufferings*, and Labours, *of this preſent Time, are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which ſhall be revealed in us* (h). We labour but for a Moment, but we ſhall reſt for ever. Who would not put forth all his Strength for one Hour, when for that Hour's Work he may be a Prince while he lives? *God is not unrighteous, to forget our Work and Labour of Love* (i). Will not *all our Tears be wiped away*, and all the Sorrow of our Duties be then forgotten?

§ 14. NOR does it leſs *deſerve to be conſidered, that ſtriving is the divinely appointed Way of Salvation, that all Men either do or will approve it, that the beſt Chriſtians at Death lament their Negligence, and that Heaven itſelf is often loſt for want of ſtriving, but is never had on eaſier Terms.—The ſovereign Wiſdom of God has made ſtriving neceſſary to Salvation.* Who knows the Way to Heaven better than the God of Heaven? When Men tell us, we are too ſtrict, whom do they accuſe, God, or us? If it were a Fault, it would lie in him that commands, and not in us who obey. Theſe are the Men that ask us, whether we are wiſer than all the World beſides? and yet they will pretend to be wiſer than God. How can they reconcile their Language with the Laws of God? *The Kingdom of Heaven ſuffereth Violence,*

(h) Rom. viii. 18. (i) Heb. vi. 10.

lence, and the Violent take it by Force (k). *Strive to enter in at the ſtrait Gate; for many will ſeek to enter in, and ſhall not be able* (l). *Whatſoever thy Hand findeth to do, do it with thy Might; for there is no Work, nor Device, nor Knowledge, nor Wiſdom in the Grave, whither thou goeſt* (m). *Work out your own Salvation with Fear and Trembling* (n). *Give Diligence to make your Calling and Election ſure* (o). *If the Righteous ſcarcely be ſaved, where ſhall the Ungodly and the Sinner appear* (p)? Let them bring all the ſeeming Reaſons they can, againſt the holy Violence of the Saints; this ſufficeth me to confute them all, that God is of another Mind, and He hath commanded me to do much more than I do; and tho' I could ſee no other Reaſon for it, his Will is Reaſon enough. Who ſhould make Laws for us, but He that made us? And who ſhould point out the Way to Heaven, but He that muſt bring us thither? And who ſhould fix the Terms of Salvation, but He that beſtows the Gift of Salvation? So that let the World, the Fleſh, or the Devil, ſpeak againſt a holy laborious Life, this is my Anſwer, God hath commanded it.——*Nay, there never was, or ever will be, a Man, but will approve ſuch a Life, and will one Day juſtify the Diligence of the Saints.* And who would not go that Way, which every Man

(k) Mat. xi. 12.
(l) Luke xiii, 24.
(m) Eccles. ix. 10.
(n) Phil. ii. 12.
(o) 2 Pet. i. 10.
(p) 1 Pet. iv. 18.

ſhall finally applaud? True, it is now a *Way every where ſpoken againſt.* But let me tell you, moſt that ſpeak againſt it, in their Judgments approve of it; and thoſe that are now againſt it, will ſhorrly be of another Mind. If they come to Heaven, their Mind muſt be changed before they come there. If they go to Hell, their Judgment will then be altered, whether they will or no. Remember this, you that love the Opinion and Way of the Multitude; why then will you not be of the Opinion that all will be of? Why will you be of a Judgment, which you are ſure all of you ſhortly to change? Oh that you were but as wiſe in this, as thoſe in Hell!——*Even the beſt of Chriſtians, when they come to die, exceedingly lament their Negligence.* They then wiſh, "Oh that I had been "a thouſand Times more holy, more hea-"venly, more laborious for my Soul! The "World accuſes me for doing too much, but "my own Conſcience accuſes me for doing too "little. It is far eaſier bearing the Scoffs "of the World, than the Laſhes of Conſci-"ence. I had rather be reproached by the "Devil for ſeeking Salvation, than reproved of "God for neglecting it." How do their Failings thus wound and diſquiet them, who have been the Wonders of the World for their heavenly Converſation!——*It is for Want of more Diligence, that Heaven itſelf is often loſt.* When they that have *heard the Word, and anon with Joy received it, and have done many Things, and*

heard

heard the Miniſters of Chriſt *gladly* (q) ſhall yet periſh; ſhould not this rouze us out of our Security? How far hath many a Man followed Chriſt, and yet forſook him, when all worldly Intereſts and Hopes were to be renounced? ——*God hath reſolved, that Heaven ſhall not be had on eaſier Terms.* Reſt muſt always follow Labour. *Without Holineſs, no Man ſhall ſee the Lord* (r). Seriouſneſs is the very Thing wherein conſiſts our Sincerity. If thou art not ſerious, thou art not a Chriſtian. It is not only a high Degree in Chriſtianity, but the very Life and Eſſence of it. As Fencers upon a Stage differ from Soldiers fighting for their Lives; ſo Hypocrites differ from ſerious Chriſtians. If Men could be ſaved without this ſerious Diligence, they would never regard it; all the Excellencies of God's Ways would never entice them. But when God hath reſolved, that, without ſerious Diligence here, you ſhall not reſt hereafter, is it not Wiſdom to exert ourſelves to the utmoſt?

§ 15. But to perſuade thee, if poſſible, *Reader*, to be ſerious in thy Endeavours for Heaven, let me add more Conſiderations. As for Inſtance, conſider,—*God is in earneſt with you; and why ſhould you not be ſo with him?* In his *Commands*, his *Threatnings*, his *Promiſes*, He means as He ſpeaks. In his *Judgments* He is ſerious. Was He not ſo, when He *drowned the World?* When He *conſumed Sodom and Gomorrah?* And when

(q) Matt. xiii. 20. Mark vi. 20. (r) Heb. xii. 14.

when He *ſcattered the Jews?* Is it Time then to trifle with God?——*Jeſus Chriſt was ſerious in purchaſing our Redemption.* In teaching, He neglected his Meat and Drink. In Prayer, *He continued all Night.* In doing good, *his Friends* thought *him beſide himſelf.* In Suffering, *He faſted forty Days, was tempted, betrayed, ſpit upon, buffeted, crowned with Thorns, ſweat Drops of Blood, was crucified, pierced, died:* There was no Jeſting in all this. And ſhould we not be ſerious in ſeeking our own Salvation?——*The Holy Spirit is ſerious in ſolliciting us to be happy.* His Motions are frequent, preſſing, and importunate. *He ſtriveth with* us. He is *grieved,* when we reſiſt him. And ſhould we not be ſerious then in obeying, and yielding to, his Motions?——*God is ſerious in hearing our Prayers, and beſtowing his Mercies.* He is *afflicted with us.* He *regardeth every Groan and Sigh,* and *puts every Tear into his Bottle.* The next Time thou art in Trouble, thou wilt beg for a ſerious Regard of thy Prayers. And ſhall we expect real Mercies, when we are ſlight and ſuperficial in the Work of God?——*The Miniſters of Chriſt are ſerious in exhorting and inſtructing you.* They beg of God, and of you; and long more for the Salvation of your Souls, than for any worldly Good. If they kill themſelves with their Labour, or ſuffer Martyrdom for preaching the Goſpel; they think their Lives are well beſtowed, ſo that they prevail for the ſaving your Souls. And ſhall other

Men

Men be ſo painful and careful for your Salvation, and you be ſo careleſs and negligent of your own?——*How diligent and ſerious are all the Creatures in ſerving you?* What Haſte makes the *Sun* to compaſs the World? The *Fountains* are always flowing for thy Uſe; the *Rivers* ſtill running; *Spring* and *Harveſt* keep their Times. How hard does thy *Ox* labour for thee from Day to Day? How ſpeedily does thy *Horſe* travel with thee? And ſhalt thou only be negligent? Shall all theſe be ſo ſerious in ſerving thee, and thou ſo careleſs in thy Service to God?——*The Servants of the World and the Devil are ſerious and diligent.* They work, as if they could never do enough. They make Haſte, as if afraid of coming to Hell too late. They bear down Miniſters, Sermons, and all before them. And ſhall they be more diligent for Damnation, than thou for Salvation? Haſt thou not a better Maſter, ſweeter Employment, greater Encouragement, and a better Reward?——*Time was, when thou waſt ſerious thyſelf in ſerving Satan and the Fleſh, if it be not ſo yet.* How eagerly didſt thou follow thy Sports, thy evil Company, and ſinful Delights? And wilt thou not now be as earneſt and violent for God?——*You are to this Day in earneſt about the Things of this Life.* If you are ſick, or in Pain, what ſerious Complaints do you utter? If you are poor, how hard do you labour for a Livelihood? And is not the Buſineſs of your Salvation of far greater Moment?——*There is*

no

no Jeſting in Heaven or Hell. The Saints have a real Happineſs, and the Damned a real Miſery. There are no remiſs or ſleepy Praiſes in Heaven, nor ſuch Lamentations in Hell. All there are in earneſt. When thou, *Reader*, ſhalt come to Death and Judgment, O what deep, Heart-piercing Thoughts wilt thou have of Eternity! Methinks I foreſee thee already aſtoniſhed, to think how thou couldſt poſſibly make ſo light of theſe Things. Methinks I even hear thee crying out of thy Stupidity and Madneſs.

§ 16. And now, *Reader*, having laid down theſe undeniable Arguments, I do, in the Name of God, demand thy Reſolution; Wilt thou yield Obedience, or not? I am confident thy Conſcience is convinced of thy Duty. Dareſt thou now go on in thy common careleſs Courſe, againſt the plain Evidence of Reaſon, and Commands of God, and againſt the Light of thy own Conſcience? Dareſt thou live as looſely, ſin as boldly, and pray as ſeldom, as before? Dareſt thou profane the Sabbath, ſlight the Service of God, and think of thine everlaſting State as careleſsly as before? Or doſt thou not rather reſolve to *gird up the Loins of thy Mind*, and ſet thyſelf wholly to the Work of thy Salvation, and break through the Oppoſitions, and ſlight the Scoffs and Perſecutions of the World, and *lay aſide every Weight, and the Sin which doth ſo eaſily beſet thee, and run with Patience the Race that is ſet before thee?* I hope theſe are thy full Reſolutions. Yet, becauſe I know

know the Obſtinacy of the Heart of Man, and becauſe I am ſollicitous thy Soul might live, I once more intreat thy Attention to the following Queſtions; and I command thee from God, that thou ſtifle not thy Conſcience, nor reſiſt Conviction; but anſwer them faithfully, and obey accordingly.——If, by being diligent in Godlineſs, you could grow rich, get Honour or Preferment in the World, be recovered from Sickneſs, or live for ever in Proſperity on Earth; what Lives would you lead, and what Pains would you take in the Service of God? And is not the Saints Reſt a more excellent Happineſs than all this? —— If it were Felony to break the Sabbath, neglect ſecret or Family-Worſhip, or be looſe in your Lives; what Manner of Perſons would you then be? And is not that eternal Death more terrible than temporal? —— If God uſually puniſhed with ſome preſent Judgment every Act of Sin, as he did the Lye of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, what Kind of Lives would you lead? And is not eternal Wrath far more terrible? —— If one of your Acquaintance ſhould come from the Dead, and tell you, that he ſuffered the Torments of Hell for thoſe Sins you are guilty of; what Manner of Perſons would you afterwards be? How much more ſhould the Warnings of God affright you?——If you knew that this were the laſt Day you had to live in the World, how would you ſpend it? And you know

not

not but it may be your laſt, and are ſure your laſt is near.——If you had ſeen the general Diſſolution of the World, and all the Pomp and Glory of it conſumed to Aſhes; what would ſuch a Sight perſuade thee to do? Such a Sight you ſhall certainly ſee.——If you had ſeen the Judgment ſet, and the Books opened, and the Wicked ſtand trembling on the left Hand of the Judge, and the Godly rejoicing on the right Hand, and their different Sentence pronounced; what Perſons would you have been after ſuch a Sight? This Sight you ſhall one Day ſurely ſee.——If you had ſeen Hell open, and all the Damned there in their eaſeleſs Torments; alſo Heaven opened, as *Stephen* did, and all the Saints there triumphing in Glory; what a Life would you lead after ſuch Sights? Theſe you will ſee before it be long.——If you had lain in Hell but one Year, or one Day, or Hour, and there felt the Torments you now hear of; how ſeriouſly would you then ſpeak of Hell, and pray againſt it? And will you not take God's Word for the Truth of this, except you feel it?——Or if you had poſſeſſed the Glory of Heaven but one Year; what Pains would you take, rather than be deprived of ſuch incomparable Glory?——Thus I have ſaid enough, if not to ſtir up the Sinner to a ſerious working out his Salvation, yet at leaſt to ſilence him, and leave him inexcuſable at the Judgment of God: Only as we do by our Friends when they are dead, and our Words and Actions

tions can do them no Good, yet to teſtify our Affection for them we weep and mourn; ſo will I alſo do for theſe unhappy Souls.—It makes my Heart tremble, to think, how they will ſtand before the Lord confounded and ſpeechleſs! When He ſhall ſay, "Was the World, "or Satan, a better Friend to you than I? Or "had they done more for you than I had "done? Try now whether they will ſave you, "or recompence you for the Loſs of Heaven, "or be as good to you as I would have been." What will the wretched Sinner anſwer to any of this? But though Man will not hear, we may hope in ſpeaking to God. "O thou that "didſt weep and groan in Spirit over a dead "*Lazarus*, pity theſe dead and ſenſeleſs Souls, "till they are able to weep and groan in Pity "to themſelves! As thou haſt bid thy Servant "ſpeak, ſo ſpeak now thyſelf; they will hear "thy Voice ſpeaking to their Hearts, who "will not hear mine ſpeaking to their Ears. "Lord, thou haſt long knocked at theſe "Hearts in vain; now break the Doors, and "enter in."

§ 17. YET to ſhew *the Godly* why they, above all Men, ſhould be laborious for Heaven, I deſire to ask them, ——What Manner of Perſons ſhould thoſe be, whom God hath choſen to be Veſſels of Mercy? Who have felt the Smart of their Negligence in their new Birth, in their Troubles of Conſcience, in their Doubts and Fears, and in other ſharp Afflictions;

ons? Who have often confeſſed their Sin of Negligence to God in Prayer? Who have bound themſelves to God by ſo many Covenants? What Manner of Perſons ſhould they be, who are near to God as the Children of his Family? who have taſted ſuch Sweetneſs in diligent Obedience? who are many of them ſo uncertain what ſhall everlaſtingly become of their Souls? What Manner of Perſons ſhould they be in Holineſs, whoſe Sanctification is ſo imperfect? Whoſe Lives and Duties are ſo important to the ſaving or deſtroying a Multitude of Souls? and on whom the Glory of the Great God ſo much depends?——Since theſe Things are ſo, I charge thee, *Chriſtian*, in thy Maſter's Name, to conſider and reſolve the Queſtion, *What Manner of Perſons ought we to be in all Holy Converſation and Godlineſs?* And let thy Life anſwer the Queſtion as well as thy Tongue.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

How to diſcern our Title to the Saints Reſt.

§ 1. *The Folly of Men in not enquiring after a Title to the Saints Reſt*; § 2. *and their Cauſe for Terror, as long as they are deſtitute of a Title.* § 3. *Self-Examination is urged upon them*; § 4. (1) *from the Poſſibility of arriving at Certainty*; § 5—9 (2) *from the Hindrances which will be thrown in our Way by Satan, Sinners, our own Hearts, and many other Cauſes*; § 10. (3) *from conſidering how eaſy, common, and dangerous it is to be miſtaken*; *that trying will not be ſo painful as the Neglect*; *that God will ſoon try us, and that to try ourſelves will be profitable*; § 11. *and therefore the Reader is intreated no longer to delay the Trial.* § 12. *Then* (4) *Directions are given how to try*; § 13. *and* (5) *Marks for Trial are added*; *particularly*, § 14. *Do we make God our chief Good?* § 15. *Do we heartily accept of Chriſt for our Lord and Saviour?* § 16, 17. *The Chapter concludes with illuſtrating the great Importance of theſe two Marks.*

§ 1. IS there ſuch a glorious Reſt ſo near at Hand? And ſhall none enjoy it but the People of God? What mean moſt of the World then, to live ſo contentedly without *Aſſurance* of their Intereſt in this Reſt, and neglect the trying their *Title* to it? When the Lord hath ſo fully opened the Bleſſedneſs of that Kingdom, which none but obedient Believers ſhall poſſeſs; and ſo fully expreſs'd thoſe Torments, which the reſt of the World muſt eternally ſuffer; methinks they that believe this to be certainly true, ſhould never be at any Quiet in themſelves, till they were fully aſſured of their being Heirs of the Kingdom. Lord, what a ſtrange Madneſs is this, that Men, who know they muſt preſently enter upon unchangeable Joy or Pain, ſhould yet live as uncertain what ſhall be their Doom, as if they had never heard of any ſuch State; yea, and live as quietly and merrily in this Uncertainty, as if all were made ſure, and there were no Danger! Are theſe Men alive, or dead? Are they awake, or aſleep? What do they think on? Where are their Hearts? If they have but a weighty Suit at Law, how careful are they to know whether it will go for or againſt them? If they were to be tried for their Lives at an earthly Bar, how careful would they be to know whether they ſhould be ſaved or condemned, eſpecially if their Care might ſurely ſave them? If they be dangerouſly ſick, they will enquire of the Phyſician,

ſician, what think you, Sir, ſhall I eſcape, or no? But in the Buſineſs of their Salvation, they are content to be uncertain. If you ask moſt Men *a Reaſon of the Hope that is in them*, they will ſay, "Becauſe God is merciful, and Chriſt "died for Sinners," and the like general Reaſons, which any Man in the World may give as well as they: But put them to prove their Intereſt in Chriſt, and in the ſaving Mercy of God, and they can ſay nothing to the Purpoſe. If God or Man ſhould ſay to them, What Caſe is thy Soul in, Man? Is it regenerate, ſanctified, and pardoned, or no? He would be ready to ſay, as *Cain* of *Abel*, "*I know not, am I my* "Soul's *Keeper?* I hope well; I truſt God "with my Soul; I ſhall ſpeed as well as other "Men do; I thank God, I never made any "Doubt of my Salvation." Thou haſt Cauſe to doubt, becauſe thou never didſt doubt; and yet more, becauſe thou haſt been ſo careleſs in thy Confidence. What do thy Expreſſions diſcover, but a wilful Neglect of thy own Salvation? As a Ship-Maſter that ſhould let his Veſſel alone, and ſay, "I will venture it among the "Rocks, and Waves, and Winds; I will truſt "God with it; it will ſpeed as well as other Veſ-"ſels." What horrible Abuſe of God is this, to pretend to truſt God, to cloak their own wilful Negligence? If thou didſt really truſt God, thou wouldſt alſo be ruled by him, and truſt him in his own appointed Way. He requires thee to *give Diligence to make thy Calling*

and Election ſure (a), and ſo to truſt him. He hath marked thee out a Way in Scripture, by which thou are charged to *ſearch and try thyſelf*, and mayeſt arrive at Certainty. Were he not a fooliſh Traveller, that would hold on his Way, when he does not know whether he be right or wrong; and ſay, "I hope I am "right; I will go on and truſt God?" Art not thou guilty of this Folly in thy Travels to Eternity? Not conſidering that a little ſerious Enquiry, whether thy Way be right, might ſave thee a great deal of Labour, which thou beſtoweſt in vain, and muſt undo again, or elſe thou wilt miſs of Salvation, and undo thyſelf.

§ 2. How canſt thou think or ſpeak of the *Great God* without Terror, as long as thou art uncertain whether He be thy Father, or thy Enemy, and knoweſt not but all his Perfections may be employed againſt thee? Or of *Jeſus Chriſt*, when thou knoweſt not whether his Blood hath purged thy Soul; whether He will condemn, or acquit thee in Judgment; nor whether he be the Foundation of thy Happineſs, or *a Stone of Stumbling*, to *break* thee, and *grind thee to Powder?* How canſt thou open the *Bible*, and read a Chapter, but it ſhould terrify thee? Methinks every Leaf ſhould be to thee as *Belſhazzar's Writing on the Wall*, except only that which draws thee to try and reform. If thou readeſt the *Promiſes*, thou knoweſt

(a) 2 Pet. i. 10.

knoweſt not whether they ſhall be fulfilled to thee. If thou readeſt the *Threatenings*, for any Thing thou knoweſt thou readeſt thy own Sentence. No Wonder thou art an Enemy to *plain Preaching*, and ſay of the *Miniſter*, as *Ahab* of the *Prophet*, *I hate him, for he doth not propheſy Good concerning me, but Evil.* How canſt thou without Terror join in *Prayer?* When thou receiveſt the *Sacrament*, thou knoweſt not whether it be thy Bane or Bliſs. What Comfort canſt thou find in thy *Friends*, and *Honours*, and *Houſes*, and *Lands*, till thou knoweſt thou haſt the Love of God with them, and ſhalt have Reſt with him when thou leaveſt them? Offer a Priſoner, before he knows his Sentence, either Muſick, or Cloaths, or Preferment; what are they to him, till he knows he ſhall eſcape with his Life? for if he knows he muſt die the next Day, it will be ſmall Comfort to die rich or honourable. Methinks it ſhould be ſo with thee, till thou knoweſt thy eternal State. When thou lieſt down to take thy Reſt, methinks the Uncertainty of thy Salvation ſhould keep thee waking, or amaze thee in thy Dreams, and trouble thy Sleep. Doth it not grieve thee to ſee the *People of God* ſo comfortable in their Way to Glory, when thou haſt no good Hope of ever enjoying it thyſelf? How canſt thou think of thy *dying Hour?* Thou knoweſt it is near, and there is no avoiding it, nor any Medicine found out that can prevent it. If thou ſhouldſt die this Day, (and who

knows what a Day may bring forth?) thou art not certain whether thou ſhalt go to Heaven or Hell. And canſt thou be merry, till thou art got out of this dangerous State? What Shift doſt thou make to preſerve thy Heart from Horror, when thou remembereſt the great *Judgment-Day*, and *everlaſting Flames?* When thou heareſt of it, doſt thou not *tremble*, as *Felix?* If the *Keepers ſhook, and became as dead Men*, when they ſaw *the Angel come and roll back the Stone from Chriſt's Sepulchre*; how canſt thou think of living in Hell with Devils, till thou haſt got ſome well-grounded Aſſurance that thou ſhalt eſcape it? Thy Bed is very ſoft, or thy Heart is very hard, if thou canſt ſleep ſoundly in this uncertain Caſe.

§ 3. If this general Uncertainty of the World about their Salvation were remedileſs, then muſt it be born as other unavoidable Miſeries. But, alas! the common Cauſe is wilful Negligence. Men will not be perſuaded to uſe the Remedy. The great Means to conquer this Uncertainty is *Self-Examination*, or *the ſerious and diligent trying of a Man's Heart and State by the Rule of Scripture*. Either Men underſtand not the Nature and Uſe of this Duty, or elſe they will not be at the Pains to try. *Go through a Congregation of a thouſand Men, and how few of them ſhall you meet with, that ever beſtowed one Hour in all their Lives in a cloſe Examination of their Title to Heaven?* Ask thy own Conſcience, *Reader*, when was the Time,

Time, and where was the Place, that ever thou ſolemnly tookeſt thy Heart to task, as in the Sight of God, and didſt examine it by Scripture, whether it be renewed or not? Whether it be holy or not? Whether it be ſet moſt on God or the Creatures, on Heaven or Earth? and when didſt thou follow on this Examination till thou hadſt diſcovered thy Condition, and paſs'd Sentence on thyſelf accordingly? But becauſe this is a Work of ſo high Importance, and ſo commonly neglected, I will therefore ſhew,——*that it is poſſible by trying to come to a Certainty*;——*what hinders Men from trying and knowing their State*;——*then offer Motives to examine*;—— *and Directions*;—— *together with ſome Marks out of Scripture*, by which you may try, and certainly know, whether you are the People of God or not.

§ 4. (1) *Scripture ſhews, that Certainty of Salvation may be attained, and ought to be laboured for*: When it tells us ſo frequently, that the Saints before us have known their Juſtification and future Salvation: When it declares, that *whoſoever believeth in Chriſt ſhall not periſh, but have everlaſting Life*; which it would be in vain to declare, if we cannot know ourſelves to be Believers or not: When it makes ſuch a wide Difference between the Children of God, and the Children of the Devil: When it bids us *give Diligence to make our Calling and Election ſure*; and earneſtly urges us to *examine, prove, know our own ſelves, whether we be in*

the Faith, and whether *Jeſus Chriſt be in us, except we be Reprobates:* Alſo when its Precepts require us to *rejoice always*, to call *God our Father*, to *live in his Praiſes*, to *love Chriſt's Appearing*, to wiſh that he may *come quickly*, and to *comfort ourſelves with* the Mention of *it*. But who can do any of theſe heartily, that is not in ſome Meaſure ſure that he is the Child of God?

§ 5. (2) *Among the many Hindrances which keep Men from Self-Examination*, we cannot doubt but *Satan will do his Part*. If all the Power he hath, or all the Means and Inſtruments he can employ, can do it, he will be ſure above all Duties to keep you from this. He is loth the Godly ſhould have that Joy, Aſſurance, and Advantage againſt Corruption, which the faithful Performance of Self-Examination would procure them. As for the Ungodly, he knows if they ſhould once earneſtly examine, they would find out his Deceits, and their own Danger, and ſo be very likely to eſcape him. How could he get ſo many Millions to Hell willingly, if they knew they were going thither! And how could they avoid knowing it, if they did but thoroughly try; having ſuch a clear Light and ſure Rule in the Scripture to diſcover it? If the Snare be not hid, the Bird will eſcape it. Satan knows how to angle for Souls, better than to ſhew them the Hook and Line, or fright them away with a Noiſe, or with his own Appearance. Therefore

fore he labours to keep them from a ſearching Miniſtry; or to keep the Miniſter from helping them to ſearch; or to take off the Edge of the Word, that it may not *pierce and divide*; or to turn away their Thoughts; or to poſſeſs them with Prejudice. Satan knows when the Miniſter hath provided a ſearching Sermon, fitted to the State and Neceſſity of a Hearer, and therefore he will keep him away that Day, if it be poſſible; or caſt him into a Sleep; or ſteal away the Word by the Cares and Talk of the World; or ſome Way prevent its Operation.

§ 6. *Another great Hinderance to Self-Examination ariſes from wicked Men.* Their Examples; their merry Company and Diſcourſe; their continually inſiſting on worldly Concerns; their Raillery and Scoffs at godly Perſons; alſo their Perſuaſions, Allurements, and Threats, are each of them exceeding great Temptations to Security. God doth ſcarce ever open the Eyes of a poor Sinner, to ſee that his Way is wrong, but preſently there is a Multitude of *Satan's Apoſtles* ready to deceive and ſettle him again in the quiet Poſſeſſion of his former Maſter. "What, ſay they, do you make a Doubt "of your Salvation, who have lived ſo well, "and done no Body any Harm? God is mer-"ciful, and if ſuch as you ſhall not be ſaved, "God help a great many! What do you think "of all your Fore-Fathers? And what will be-"come of all your Friends and Neighbours

"that

" that live as you do? Will they all be dam-
" ned? Come, come, if you hearken to theſe
" Preachers, they will drive you out of your
" Wits. Are not all Men Sinners? And did
" not Chriſt die to ſave Sinners? Never trouble
" your Head with theſe Thoughts, and you
" ſhall do well." O how many Thouſands have ſuch Charms kept aſleep in Deceit and Security, till Death and Hell have awakened them! The Lord calls to the Sinner, and tells him, *The Gate is ſtrait, the Way is narrow, and few find it: Try and examine, give Diligence to make ſure.* The World cries, *Never doubt, never trouble yourſelves with theſe Thoughts.* In this Strait, *Sinner*, conſider, it is Chriſt, and not your Fore-fathers, or Neighbours, or Friends that muſt judge you at laſt; and if Chriſt condemn you, theſe cannot ſave you: Therefore common Reaſon may tell you, that it is not from the Words of ignorant Men, but from the Word of God, you muſt fetch your Hopes of Salvation. When *Ahab* would enquire among the Multitude of flattering Prophets, it was his Death. They can flatter Men into the Snare, but they cannot tell how to bring them out. *Let no Man deceive you with vain Words, for becauſe of theſe Things cometh the Wrath of God upon the Children of Diſobedience; be not ye therefore Partakers with them* (b).

§ 7. *But the greateſt Hindrances are in Men's own Hearts.*——*Some are ſo ignorant*, that they know

(b) Ephes. v. 6, 7.

know not what Self-Examination is, nor what a Miniſter means when he perſuadeth them to try themſelves: Or they know not that there is any Neceſſity for it; but think every Man is bound to believe that his Sins are pardoned, whether it be true or falſe, and that it is a great Fault to make any Queſtion of it: Or they do not think that Aſſurance can be attained: Or that there is any great Difference between one Man and another, but that we are all Chriſtians, and therefore need not trouble ourſelves any further: Or at leaſt they know not wherein the Difference lies. They have as groſs an Idea of Regeneration, as *Nicodemus* had.——*Some will not believe*, that God will ever make ſuch a Difference betwixt Men in the Life to come, and therefore will not ſearch themſelves whether they differ here.——*Some are ſo ſtupified*, ſay what we can to them, that they lay it not to Heart, but give us the Hearing, and there's an End.——*Some are ſo poſſeſſed with Self-Love and Pride*, that they will not ſo much as ſuſpect they are in any Danger. Like a proud Tradeſman, who ſcorns the prudent Advice of caſting up his Books. As fond Parents will not believe or hear any Evil of their Children.——*Some are ſo guilty*, that they dare not try; and yet they dare venture on a more dreadful Trial.——*Some are ſo in love with Sin, and ſo diſlike the Ways of God*, that they dare not try their Ways, leſt they be forced from the Courſe they love, to that which they loath.

loath.—*Some are ſo reſolved never to change their preſent State*, that they neglect Examination as an uſeleſs Thing. Before they will ſeek a new Way, when they have lived ſo long, and gone ſo far, they will put their eternal State to the Venture, come of it what will.——*Many Men are ſo buſy in the World*, that they cannot ſet themſelves to the trying their Title to Heaven. ——*Others are ſo clogged with Slothfulneſs of Spirit*, that they will not be at the Pains of an Hour's Examination of their own Hearts.—— *But the moſt common and dangerous Impediment is that falſe Faith and Hope, commonly called Preſumption*, which bears up the Hearts of the greateſt Part of the World, and ſo keeps them from ſuſpecting their Danger.

§ 8. And if a Man ſhould break through all theſe Hindrances, and ſet upon the Duty of Self-Examination, yet *Aſſurance* is not preſently attained. Too many deceive themſelves in their Enquiries after it, through one or other of the following Cauſes.——*There is ſuch Confuſion and Darkneſs in the Soul of Man, eſpecially of an unregenerate Man*, that he can ſcarcely tell what he doth, or what is in him. As in a Houſe, where nothing is in its proper Place, it will be difficult to find what is wanted; ſo it is in the Heart where all Things are in Diſorder. ——*Moſt Men accuſtom themſelves to be Strangers at Home*, and too little obſerve the Temper and Motions of their own Hearts.——*Many are reſolved what to judge before they try.* Like a bribed

bribed Judge, who examines as if he he would judge uprightly, when he is previouſly reſolved which Way the Cauſe ſhall go.——*Men are partial in their own Cauſe*; ready to think their great Sins ſmall, and their ſmall Sins none; their Gifts of Nature to be the Work of Grace, and to ſay, *All theſe have I kept from my Youth*; *I am rich, and increaſed in Goods, and have need of nothing.—Moſt Men ſearch but by the Halves.* If it will not eaſily and quickly be done, they are diſcouraged, and leave off.——*They try themſelves by falſe Marks and Rules*; not knowing wherein the Truth of Chriſtianity doth conſiſt; ſome looking beyond, and ſome ſhort of the Scripture-Standard.——*And frequently they miſcarry in this Work, by attempting it in their own Strength.* As ſome expect the Spirit ſhould do it without them, ſo others attempt it themſelves without ſeeking or expecting the Help of the Spirit. Both theſe will certainly miſcarry in their Aſſurance.

§ 9. Some other Hindrances keep even true Chriſtians from comfortable Certainty. As for Inſtance;——*The Weakneſs of Grace.* Small Things are hardly diſcerned. Moſt Chriſtians content themſelves with a ſmall Meaſure of Grace, and do not follow on to ſpiritual Strength and Manhood. The chief Remedy for ſuch would be, to follow on their Duty, till their Graces be increaſed. Wait upon God in the Uſe of his preſcribed Means, and he will undoubtedly bleſs you with Increaſe. Oh that Chriſt-

Chriſtians would beſtow moſt of that Time in getting more Grace, which they beſtow in anxious Doubtings whether they have any or none; and lay out thoſe ſerious Affections in praying for more Grace, which they beſtow in fruitleſs Complaints! I beſeech thee, *Chriſtian*, take this Advice as from God; and then, when thou believeſt ſtrongly, and loveſt fervently, thou canſt no more doubt of thy Faith and Love, than a Man that is very hot can doubt of his Warmth, or a Man that is ſtrong and luſty can doubt of his being alive.——*Chriſtians hinder their own Comfort by looking more at Signs, which tell them what they are, than at Precepts, which tell them what they ſhould do.* As if their preſent Caſe muſt needs be their everlaſting Caſe; and if they be now unpardoned, there were no Remedy. Were he not mad, that would lie weeping becauſe he is not pardoned, when his Prince ſtands by all the while offering him a Pardon, and perſuading him to accept of it? Juſtifying Faith, *Chriſtian*, is *not thy Perſuaſion of God's ſpecial Love to thee*, but *thy accepting Chriſt to make thee lovely.* It is far better to accept Chriſt as offered, than ſpend ſo much Time in doubting whether we have Chriſt or no.——*Another Cauſe of Diſtreſs to Chriſtians is, their miſtaking Aſſurance for the Joy that ſometimes accompanies it.* As if a Child ſhould take himſelf for a Son no longer, than while he ſees the Smiles of his Father's Face, or hears the comfortable Expreſſions of his Mouth:

And

And as if the Father ceaſed to be a Father, whenever he ceaſed thoſe Smiles and Speeches. ——*The Trouble of Souls is alſo increaſed by their not knowing the ordinary Way of God's conveying Comfort.* They think they have nothing to do but wait when God will beſtow it. But they muſt know, that the Matter of their Comfort is in the Promiſes, and thence they muſt fetch it as often as they expect it, by daily and diligently meditating upon the Promiſes, and in this Way they may expect the Spirit will communicate Comfort to their Souls. The Joy of the Promiſes, and the Joy of the Holy Ghoſt, are one.——Add to this, *their expecting a greater Meaſure of Aſſurance than God uſually beſtows.* As long as they have any Doubting, they think they have no Aſſurance. They conſider not that there are many Degrees of Certainty. While they are here, they ſhall *know but in Part.*——Add alſo, *their deriving their Comfort at firſt from inſufficient Grounds.* This may be the Caſe of a gracious Soul, who hath better Grounds, but doth not ſee them. As an Infant hath Life before he knoweth it, and many Miſapprehenſions of himſelf and other Things, yet it will not follow that he hath no Life. So when Chriſtians find a Flaw in their firſt Comforts, they are apt to judge it a Flaw in their Safety.——*Many continue under Doubting, through the exceeding Weakneſs of their natural Parts.* Many honeſt Hearts have weak Heads, and know not how to perform the Work

Work of Self-Trial. They will acknowledge the Premiſes, and yet deny the apparent Concluſion. If God do not ſome other Way ſupply the Defect of their Reaſon, I ſee not how they ſhould have clear and ſettled Peace.—— *One great and too common Cauſe of Diſtreſs is, the ſecret maintaining ſome known Sin.* This abates the Degree of our Graces, and ſo makes them more undiſcernable. It obſcureth that which it deſtroyeth not; for it beareth ſuch Sway, that Grace is not in Action, nor ſeems to ſtir, nor is ſcarce heard ſpeak for the Noiſe of this Corruption. It puts out, or dimmeth the Eye of the Soul, and ſtupifies it, that it can neither ſee nor feel its own Condition. But eſpecially it provokes God to withdraw himſelf, his Comforts, and the Aſſiſtance of his Spirit, without which we may ſearch long enough before we have Aſſurance. God hath made a Separation between Sin and Peace. As long as thou doſt cheriſh thy Pride, thy Love of the World, the Deſires of the Fleſh, or any unchriſtian Practice, thou expecteſt Comfort in vain. If any Man *ſetteth up his Idols in his Heart, and putteth the Stumbling-Block of his Iniquity before his Face, and cometh to a* Miniſter, or to God *to enquire* for Comfort; inſtead of comforting him, God *will anſwer him that cometh, according to the Multitude of his Idols* (c). — *Another very great and common Cauſe of the want of Comfort is, when Grace is not kept in conſtant and lively Exerciſe.* The

(c) Ezek. xiv. 3—9.

The Way of painful Duty, is the Way of fulleſt Comfort. Peace and Comfort, are Chriſt's great Encouragement to Faithfulneſs and Obedience; and therefore, tho' our Obedience does not merit them, yet they uſually riſe and fall with our Diligence in Duty As Prayer muſt have Faith and Fervency to procure its Succeſs, beſides the Blood and Interceſſion of Chriſt, ſo muſt all other Parts of our Obedience. If thou groweſt ſeldom, and cuſtomary, and cold in Duty, eſpecially in thy ſecret Prayers to God, and yet findeſt no Abatement in thy Joys, I cannot but fear thy Joys are either carnal or diabolical. Beſides, Grace is never apparent and ſenſible to the Soul, but while it is in Action; therefore Want of Action muſt cauſe Want of Aſſurance. And the Action of the Soul upon ſuch excellent Objects naturally bringeth Conſolation with it. The very Act of loving God in Chriſt is inexpreſſibly ſweet. The Soul that is beſt furniſhed with Grace, when it is not in Action, is like a Lute well ſtringed and tuned, which while it lieth ſtill maketh no more Muſick than a common Piece of Wood, but when it is handled by a skilful Muſician, the Melody is delightful. Some Degree of Comfort follows every good Action, as Heat accompanies Fire, and as Beams and Influence iſſue from the Sun. A Man that is cold, ſhould labour till Heat be excited; ſo he that wants Aſſurance, muſt not ſtand ſtill, but exerciſe his Graces, till his Doubts vaniſh.——

The Want of Conſolation in the Soul is alſo very commonly owing to bodily Melancholy. It is no more Wonder for a conſcientious Man, under Melancholy, to doubt, and fear, and deſpair, than for a ſick Man to groan, or a Child to cry when it is chaſtiſed. Without the *Phyſician* in this Caſe the Labours of the *Divine* are uſually in vain. You may ſilence, but you cannot comfort them. You may make them confeſs they have ſome Grace, and yet cannot bring them to the comfortable Concluſion. All the good Thoughts of their State, which you can poſſibly help them to, are ſeldom above a Day or two old. They cry out of Sin, and the Wrath of God, when the chief Cauſe is in their bodily Diſtemper.

§ 10. (3) *As for Motives to perſuade to the Duty of Self-Examination*, I intreat you to conſider the following. — *To be deceived about your Title to Heaven is very eaſy.* Many are now in Hell, that never ſuſpected any Falſhood in their Hearts, that excelled in worldly Wiſdom, that lived in the clear Light of the Goſpel, and even preached againſt the Negligence of others. ——*To be miſtaken in this great Point is alſo very common.* It is the Caſe of moſt in the World. In the *old World*, and in *Sodom*, we find none that were in any Fear of Judgment. Almoſt all Men among us verily look to be ſaved; yet Chriſt tells us, *there be few that find the ſtrait Gate, and narrow Way, which leadeth*

eth unto Life (d). And if ſuch Multitudes are deceived, ſhould not we ſearch the more diligently, leſt we ſhould be deceived as well as they?—*Nothing is more dangerous than to be thus miſtaken.* If the Godly judge their State worſe than it is, the Conſequences of this Miſtake will be ſorrowful; but the Miſchief flowing from the Miſtake of the Ungodly is unſpeakable. It will exceedingly confirm them in the Service of Satan. It will render ineffectual the Means that ſhould do them good. It will keep a Man from compaſſionating his own Soul. It is a Caſe of the greateſt Moment, where everlaſting Salvation or Damnation is to be determined. And if you miſtake till Death, you are undone for ever. Seeing then the Danger is ſo great, what wiſe Man would not follow the Search of his Heart both Night and Day, till he were aſſured of his Safety?——*Conſider, how ſmall the Labour of this Duty is, in Compariſon of that Sorrow which followeth its Neglect.* You can endure to toil and ſweat from Year to Year, to prevent Poverty; and why not ſpend a little Time in Self-Examination, to prevent eternal Miſery?——*By neglecting this Duty, you can ſcarce do Satan a greater Pleaſure, nor yourſelf a greater Injury.* It is the grand Deſign of the Devil in all his Temptations, to deceive you, and keep you ignorant of your Danger, till you feel the everlaſting Flames; and will you join with him to deceive yourſelf? If you

(d) Mat. vii. 14.

do this for him, you do the greateſt Part of his Work. And hath he deſerved ſo well of you, that you ſhould aſſiſt him in ſuch a Deſign as your Damnation?——*The Time is nigh when God will ſearch you.* If it be but in this Life by Affliction, it will make you wiſh, that you had tried and *judged yourſelves*, that you might have eſcaped the Judgment of God. It was a terrible Voice to *Adam*, *Where art thou? Haſt thou eaten of the Tree?* And to *Cain*, *Where is thy Brother?* Men *conſider not in their Hearts, that I*, ſaith the Lord, *remember all their Wickedneſs; now their own Doings have beſet them about, they are before my Face* (e).——*Conſider alſo, what would be the ſweet Effects of this Self-Examination.*——If thou be upright and godly, it will lead thee ſtrait towards Aſſurance of God's Love; if thou be not, though it will trouble thee at the preſent, yet it will tend to thy Happineſs, and at length lead thee to the Aſſurance of that Happineſs. Is it not a deſirable Thing to know what ſhall befal us hereafter? eſpecially what ſhall befal our Souls? and what Place and State we muſt be in for ever? And as the very *Knowledge* itſelf is deſirable, how much greater will the *Comfort* be of that Certainty of Salvation? What ſweet Thoughts wilt thou have of God? All that Greatneſs and Juſtice, which is the Terror of others, will be thy Joy. How ſweet may be thy Thoughts of Chriſt, and the Blood he hath ſhed,

(e) Hoſ. vii. 2.

ſhed, and the Benefits he hath procured? How welcome will the Word of God be to thee, and *how beautiful the* very *Feet of thoſe that bring* it? How ſweet will be the Promiſes, when thou art ſure they are thy own? The very Threatenings will occaſion thy Comfort, to remember that thou haſt eſcaped them. What Boldneſs and Comfort mayſt thou then have in Prayer, when thou canſt ſay, *our Father*, in full Aſſurance? It will make the Lord's Supper a refreſhing Feaſt to thy Soul. It will multiply the Sweetneſs of every common Mercy. How comfortably mayſt thou then undergo all Afflictions? How will it ſweeten thy Forethoughts of Death and Judgment, of Heaven and Hell? How lively will it make thee in the Work of the Lord, and how profitable to all around thee? What Vigour will it infuſe into all thy Graces and Affections, kindle thy Repentance, inflame thy Love, quicken thy Deſires, and confirm thy Faith, be a Fountain of continual Rejoicing, overflow thy Heart with Thankfulneſs, raiſe thee high in the delightful Work of Praiſe, help thee to be heavenly-minded, and render thee perſevering in all? All theſe ſweet Effects of Aſſurance would make thy Life a Heaven upon Earth.

§ 11 Though I am certain theſe Motives have Weight of Reaſon in them, yet I am jealous, *Reader*, leſt you lay aſide the Book, as if you had done, and never ſet yourſelf to the Practice of the Duty. The Caſe in Hand is of

the greateſt Moment, Whether thou ſhalt everlaſtingly live in Heaven or Hell? I here requeſt thee, in Behalf of thy Soul; nay, I charge thee, in the Name of the Lord, that thou defer no longer, but take thy Heart to task in good earneſt, and think with thyſelf, "Is it ſo eaſy, "ſo common, and ſo dangerous to be miſta-"ken? Are there ſo many wrong Ways? Is "the Heart ſo deceitful? Why then do I not "ſearch into every Corner, till I know my "State? Muſt I ſo ſhortly undergo the Trial "at the Bar of Chriſt? And do I not preſently "try myſelf? What a Caſe were I in, if I "ſhould then miſcarry? May I know by a lit-"tle diligent Enquiry now? And do I ſtick at "the Labour?" But perhaps thou wilt ſay, "I know not how to do it." In that I am now to give thee Directions; but, alas! it will be in vain, if thou art not reſolved to practice them. Wilt thou, therefore, before thou goeſt any further, here promiſe before the Lord, to ſet thyſelf upon the ſpeedy Performance of the Duty, according to the Directions I ſhall lay down from the Word of God. I demand nothing unreaſonable or impoſſible. It is but to beſtow a few Hours, to know what ſhall become of thee for ever. If a Neighbour, or Friend, deſire but an Hour's Time of thee in Converſation, or Buſineſs, or any Thing in which thou mayſt be of Service, ſurely thou wouldſt not deny it; how much leſs ſhouldſt thou deny this to thyſelf in ſo great an Affair? I pray thee take from me this Requeſt, as if,

in

in the Name of Chriſt, I preſented it to thee on my Knees; and I will betake me on my Knees to Chriſt again, to beg that he will perſuade thy Heart to the Duty.

§ 12. (4) *The Directions how to examine thyſelf are ſuch as theſe:*——*Empty thy Mind of all other Cares and Thoughts*, that they may not diſtract or divide thy Mind. This Work will be enough at once, without joining others with it.—— *Then fall down before God in hearty Prayer*, deſiring the Aſſiſtance of his Spirit, to diſcover to thee the plain Truth of thy Condition, and to enlighten thee in the whole Progreſs of this Work.——*Make Choice of the moſt convenient Time and Place.* Let the Place be the moſt private; and the Time, when you have nothing to interrupt you; and, if poſſible, let it be the preſent Time. —— *Have in Readineſs, either in Memory or Writing, ſome Scriptures*, containing the Deſcriptions of the Saints, and the Goſpel-Terms of Salvation; and convince thyſelf thoroughly of their infallible Truth.—*Proceed then to put the Queſtion to thyſelf.* Let it not be, *whether there be any Good in thee at all?* Nor, *whether thou haſt ſuch or ſuch a Degree and Meaſure of Grace?* But, *whether ſuch or ſuch a ſaving Grace be in thee in Sincerity, or not.*——*If thy Heart draw back from the Work, force it on.* Lay thy Command upon it. Let Reaſon interpoſe, and uſe its Authority. Yea, lay the Command of God upon it, and charge it to obey upon Pain of his Diſpleaſure.

Let Conſcience alſo do its Office, till thy Heart be excited to the Work.——*Nor let thy Heart triſle away the Time, when it ſhould be diligently at the Work.* Do as the *Pſalmiſt, my Spirit made diligent Search.* He that can prevail with his own Heart, ſhall alſo prevail with God.—*If after all thy Pains, thou art not reſolved, then ſeek out for Help.* Go to one that is godly, experienced, able, and faithful, and tell him thy Caſe, and deſire his beſt Advice. Uſe the Judgment of ſuch a one, as that of a Phyſician for thy Body; though this can afford thee no full Certainty, yet it may be a great Help to ſtay and direct thee. But don't make it a Pretence to put off thy own Self-Examination. Only uſe it as one of the laſt Remedies, when thy own Endeavours will not ſerve.——*When thou haſt diſcovered thy true State, paſs Sentence on thyſelf accordingly*; either that thou art a true Chriſtian, or that thou art not. Paſs not this Sentence raſhly, nor with Self-Flattery, nor from melancholy Terrors; but deliberately, truly, and according to thy Conſcience convinced by Scripture and Reaſon.——*Labour to get thy Heart affected with its Condition, according to the Sentence paſſed on it.* If graceleſs, think of thy Miſery. If renewed and ſanctified, think what a bleſſed State the Lord hath brought thee into. Purſue theſe Thoughts, till they have left their Impreſſion on thy Heart.——*Write this Sentence, at leaſt in thy Memory.*

" At ſuch a Time, upon thorough Examina-

" tion,

" tion, I found my State to be thus, or thus." Such a Record will be very uſeful to thee hereafter. —— *Truſt not to this one Diſcovery, ſo as to try no more:* Nor let it hinder thee in the daily Search of thy Ways: Neither be diſcouraged, if the Trial muſt be often repeated. —— *Eſpecially take Heed, if unregenerate, not to conclude of thy future State by the preſent.* Don't ſay, " becauſe I am ungodly, I ſhall " die ſo; becauſe I am an Hypocrite, I ſhall " continue ſo." Don't Deſpair. Nothing but thy Unwillingneſs can keep thee from Chriſt, though thou haſt hitherto abuſed him, and diſſembled with him.

§ 13. (5) Now let me add *ſome Marks by which you may try your Title to the Saints Reſt.* I will only mention theſe two, —— *taking God for thy chief Good,* —— and *heartily accepting Chriſt for thy only Saviour and Lord.*

§ 14. *Every Soul that hath a Title to this Reſt, doth place his chief Happineſs in God.* This Reſt conſiſteth in the full and glorious Enjoyment of God. He that maketh not God his chief Good, and ultimate End, is in Heart a *Pagan* and a vile *Idolater.* Let me ask then, Doſt thou truly account it thy chief Happineſs to enjoy the Lord in Glory, or doſt thou not? Canſt thou ſay, *the Lord is my Portion? Whom have I in Heaven but thee? and there is none upon Earth that I deſire beſides thee.* If thou be an Heir of Reſt, it is thus with thee. Tho' the Fleſh will be pleading for its own Delights,

Delights, and the World will be creeping into thine Affections; yet in thy ordinary, ſettled, prevailing Judgment and Affections, thou preferreſt God before all Things in the World. ——*Thou makeſt him the very End of thy Deſires and Endeavours.* The very Reaſon why thou heareſt and prayeſt, and deſireſt to live on Earth, is chiefly this, that thou mayſt ſeek the Lord, and make ſure of thy Reſt. Though thou doſt not ſeek it ſo zealouſly as thou ſhouldſt; yet it hath the chief of thy Deſires, and Endeavours, ſo that nothing elſe is deſired or preferred before it. —— *Thou wilt think no Labour or Suffering too great to obtain it.* And though the Fleſh may ſometime ſhrink, yet thou art reſolved and contented to go through all. —— *Thy Eſteem for it will alſo be ſo high, and thy Affection to it ſo great, that thou wouldſt not exchange thy Title to it, and Hopes of it, for any worldly Good whatſoever.* If God ſhould ſet before thee an Eternity of earthly Pleaſure on one Hand, and the Saints Reſt on the other, and bid thee take thy Choice; thou wouldſt refuſe the World, and chuſe this Reſt. —— *But if thou art yet unſanctified, then thou doſt in thy Heart prefer thy worldly Happineſs before God*; and tho' thy Tongue may ſay, that God is thy chief Good, yet thy Heart doth not ſo eſteem Him. *For the World is the chief End of thy Deſires and Endeavours.* Thy very Heart is ſet upon it. Thy greateſt Care and Labour is to maintain thy Credit, or fleſhly Delights.

But

But the Life to come hath little of thy Care or Labour. Thou didſt never perceive ſo much Excellency in that unſeen Glory of another World, as to draw thy Heart after it, and ſet thee a labouring heartily for it. The little Pains thou beſtoweſt that Way, is but in the ſecond Place. God hath but the World's Leavings, only that Time and Labour which thou canſt ſpare from the World, or thoſe few, cold, and careleſs Thoughts, which follow thy conſtant, earneſt, and delightful Thoughts of earthly Things. Neither wouldſt thou do any Thing at all for Heaven, if thou kneweſt how to keep the World. But leſt thou ſhouldſt be turned into Hell, when thou canſt keep the World no longer, therefore thou wilt do ſomething. For the ſame Reaſon *thou thinkeſt the Way of God too ſtrict*, and wilt not be perſuaded to the conſtant Labour of walking according to the Goſpel-Rule; and when it comes to the Trial, that thou muſt forſake Chriſt, or thy worldly Happineſs, then thou wilt venture Heaven rather than Earth, and ſo wilfully deny thy Obedience to God. And certainly *if God would but give thee Leave to live in Health and Wealth for ever on Earth, thou wouldſt think it a better State than Reſt.* Let them ſeek for Heaven that would, thou wouldſt think this thy chief Happineſs. This is thy Caſe, if thou art yet an unregenerate Perſon, and haſt no Title to the Saints Reſt.

§ 15.

§ 15. *And* as thou takeſt God for thy chief Good, ſo *thou doſt heartily accept of Chriſt for thy only Saviour and Lord to bring thee to this Reſt.* The *former Mark* was the Sum of the firſt and great Command of the Law, *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart.* This *ſecond Mark* is the Sum of the Command of the Goſpel, *Believe in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved.* And the Performance of theſe two is the whole of Godlineſs and Chriſtianity. This Mark is but the Definition of Faith. *Doſt thou heartily conſent that Chriſt alone ſhall be thy Saviour?* and no further truſt to thy Duties and Works, than as *Means* appointed in Subordination to him? not looking at them as in the *leaſt Meaſure* able to ſatisfy the Curſe of the Law, or as a legal Righteouſneſs or any Part of it; but content to truſt thy Salvation on the Redemption made by Chriſt? *Art thou alſo content to take him for thy only Lord and King,* to govern and guide thee by his Laws and Spirit; and to obey him, even when he commandeth the hardeſt Duties, and thoſe which moſt croſs the Deſires of the Fleſh? Is it thy Sorrow when thou breakeſt thy Reſolution herein? And thy Joy when thou keepeſt cloſeſt in Obedience to him? Wouldſt thou not change thy Lord and Maſter for all the World? Thus it is with every true Chriſtian.——*But if thou be an Hypocrite, it is far otherwiſe.* Thou mayſt call Chriſt thy Lord and thy Saviour; but thou never foundeſt thyſelf ſo loſt without him,

him, as to drive thee to ſeek him, and truſt him, and lay thy Salvation on him alone. At leaſt thou didſt never heartily conſent that he ſhould govern thee as thy Lord, nor reſign up thy Soul and Life to be ruled by him, nor take his Word for the Law of thy Thoughts and Actions. It is likely thou art content to be ſaved from Hell by Chriſt when thou dieſt; but in the mean Time he ſhall command thee no further than will ſtand with thy Credit, or Pleaſure, or other worldly Ends. And if he would give thee Leave, thou hadſt far rather live after the World and Fleſh, than after the Word and Spirit. And tho' thou mayſt now and then have a Motion or Purpoſe to the contrary; yet this that I have mentioned is the ordinary Deſire and Choice of thy Heart. Thou art therefore no true Believer in Chriſt; for tho' thou confeſs Him in Words, yet in *Works* thou doſt *deny him, being abominable, and diſobedient, and unto every good Work reprobate.* This is the Caſe of thoſe that ſhall be ſhut out of the Saints Reſt.

§ 16. OBSERVE, *it is the Conſent of your Hearts, or Wills, which I eſpecially lay down to be enquired after.* I do not ask, *whether thou be aſſured of Salvation?* nor *whether thou canſt believe that thy Sins are pardoned, and that thou art beloved of God in Chriſt?* Theſe are *no Parts of juſtifying Faith,* but *excellent Fruits* of it, and they that receive them, are comforted by them; but *perhaps*

haps thou mayſt never receive them whilſt thou liveſt, and yet be a true Heir of Reſt. Do not ſay then, "I cannot believe that my "Sins are pardoned; or that I am in God's "Favour, and therefore I am no true Be-"liever." This is a moſt miſtaken Concluſion. The Queſtion is, Whether thou doſt heartily accept of Chriſt, that thou mayſt be pardoned, reconciled to God, and ſo ſaved? Doſt thou conſent that he ſhall be thy Lord, who hath bought thee, and that he ſhall bring thee to Heaven in his own Way? This is juſtifying, ſaving Faith, and the Mark by which thou mayſt try thyſelf. Yet ſtill obſerve, that all this Conſent muſt be hearty and real, not feigned or with Reſervations. It is not ſaying, as that diſſembling Son, *I go, Sir; and went not.* If any have more of the Government of thee than Chriſt, thou art not his Diſciple. I am ſure theſe two *Marks* are ſuch as every Chriſtian hath, and none but ſincere Chriſtians. O that the Lord would now perſuade thee to the cloſe Performance of this Self-Trial! That thou mayſt not tremble with Horror of Soul, when the Judge of all the World ſhall try thee; but be ſo able to prove thy Title to Reſt, that the Proſpect and Approach of Death and Judgment may raiſe thy Spirits, and fill thee with Joy!

§ 17. On the whole, as ever *Chriſtians* would have Comforts that will not deceive them,

them, let them make it the great Labour of their Lives to grow in Grace, to ſtrengthen and advance the Intereſt of Chriſt in their Souls, and to weaken and ſubdue the Intereſt of the Fleſh. Deceive not yourſelves with a Perſuaſion, that *Chriſt hath done all*, and *left you nothing to do*. To *overcome the World*, the *Fleſh*, and the *Devil*; and in order to that, to ſtand always armed upon our *watch*, and valiantly and patiently to *fight* it out, is of great Importance to our *Aſſurance* and *Salvation*. Indeed it is ſo great a Part of our *Baptiſmal Vow*, that he, who performeth it not, is no more than a *nominal Chriſtian*. Not to every one that *preſumptuouſly believeth*, but *to him that overcometh, will Chriſt give to eat of the hidden Manna, and will give him a white Stone, and in the Stone a new Name written, which no Man knoweth, ſaving him that receiveth it: He ſhall eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the Midſt of the Paradiſe of God, and ſhall not be hurt of the ſecond Death. Chriſt will confeſs his Name before his Father, and before his Angels, and make him a Pillar in the Temple of God, and he ſhall go no more out; and will write upon him the Name of his God, and the Name of the City of his God, which is New Jeruſalem, which cometh down out of Heaven from his God, and will write upon him his new Name.* Yea, *He will grant to him to ſit with him on his Throne,*

even

even as he alſo overcame, and is ſet down with his Father on his Throne. He that hath an Ear, let him hear what the Spirit ſaith unto the Churches (f).

(f) Rev. ii. 7, 11, 17. iii. 5, 12, 21, 22.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

The Duty of the People of God to excite others to seek this Reſt.

§ 1. *The Author laments that Chriſtians do ſo little to help others to obtain the Saints Reſt*; § 2. (I) *ſhews the Nature of this Duty*; *particularly*, § 3. (1) *in having our Hearts affected with the Miſery of our Brethren's Souls*, § 4—6. (2) *in taking all Opportunities to inſtruct them in the Way of Salvation*, § 7. (3) *in promoting their Profit by publick Ordinances*; § 8. (II) *He aſſigns various Reaſons why this Duty is ſo much neglected*, § 9. *and anſwers ſome Objections againſt it*: § 10—13. *Then* (III) *urges to the Diſcharge of it, by ſeveral Conſiderations*, § 14. *addreſſed to ſuch as have Knowledge, Learning, and Utterance*, § 15. *thoſe that are acquainted with Sinners*, § 16. *Phyſicians that attend dying Men*, § 17. *Perſons of Wealth and Power*, § 18. *Miniſters*, § 19. *and thoſe that are intruſted with the Care of Children or Servants*. § 20. *The Chapter concludes with an earneſt Requeſt to Chriſtian Parents to be faithful to their Truſt*.

§. 1. HATH God ſet before us ſuch a glorious Prize as the Saints Reſt, and made us capable of ſuch inconceivable Happineſs? Why then do not all the Children of this Kingdom exert themſelves more to help others to the Enjoyment of it? Alas, how little are poor Souls about us beholden to moſt of us! We ſee the Glory of the Kingdom, and they do not: We ſee the Miſery of thoſe that are out of it, and they do not: We ſee them wandering quite out of the Way, and know if they hold on, they can never come there; and they themſelves diſcern it not. And yet we will not ſeriouſly ſhew them their Danger and Error, and help to bring them into the Way, that they may live. Alas, how few Chriſtians are there to be found, that ſet themſelves with all their Might to ſave Souls! No Thanks to us, if Heaven be not empty, and if the Souls of our Brethren periſh not for ever. Conſidering how important this Duty is, to the Glory of God, and the Happineſs of Men, I will ſhew——*how it is to be performed*,——*why it is ſo much neglected*,——and then *offer ſome Conſiderations to perſuade to it*.

§ 2. (I) *The Duty of exciting and helping others to obtain the Saints Reſt* doth not mean, that every Man ſhould turn a *publick Preacher*, or that any ſhould go beyond the Bounds of their *particular Callings*; much leſs does it conſiſt in promoting a *Party-Spirit*; and leaſt of all in

ſpeaking

ſpeaking againſt Men's Faults behind their Backs, and be ſilent before their Faces. This Duty is of another Nature, and conſiſts in the following Things;——*in having our Hearts affected with the Miſery of our Brethren's Souls,*——*in taking all Opportunities to inſtruct them in the Way of Salvation,*——*and in promoting their Profit by Publick Ordinances.*

§ 3 (1) *Our Hearts muſt be affected with the Miſery of our Brethren's Souls.* We muſt be compaſſionate towards them, and yearn after their Recovery and Salvation. If we earneſtly longed after their Converſion, and our Hearts were ſolicitous to do them good, it would ſet us on work, and God would uſually bleſs it.

§ 4. (2) *We muſt take all Opportunities we poſſibly can, to inſtruct them how to attain Salvation.* If the Perſon be *ignorant*, labour to make him underſtand *the chief Happineſs of Man; how far he was once poſſeſſed of it; the Covenant God then made with him; how he broke it; what Penalty he incurred; and what Miſery he brought himſelf into:* Teach him *his Need of a Redeemer; how Chriſt did mercifully interpoſe, and bear the Penalty; what the New Covenant is; how Men are drawn to Chriſt, and what are the Riches and Priviledges which Believers have in him.* If he is not moved by theſe Things, then ſhew him *the Excellency of the Glory he neglects; the Extremity and Eternity of the Torments of the Damned; the Juſtice of enduring them for wilfully refuſing Grace; the Certainty, Nearneſs,*

and Terrors of Death and Judgment; the Vanity of all Things below; the Sinfulneſs of Sin; the Precioufneſs of Chriſt; the Neceſſity of Regeneration, Faith, and Holineſs; and the true Nature of them. If after all, you find him entertaining falſe Hopes, then *urge him to examine his State; ſhew him the Neceſſity of doing ſo; help him in it; nor leave him till you have convinced him of his Miſery and Remedy. Shew him how vain and deſtructive it is to join Chriſt and his Duties, to compoſe his juſtifying Righteouſneſs.* Yet *be ſure to draw him to the Uſe of all Means; ſuch as hearing and reading the Word, calling upon God, and aſſociating with the Godly: Perſuade him to forſake Sin, avoid all Temptations to Sin, eſpecially evil Companions, and to wait patiently on God in the Uſe of Means, as the Way in which God will be found.*

§ 5. But becauſe the Manner of performing this Work is of great Moment, obſerve therefore theſe Rules.——*Enter upon it with right Intentions.* Aim at the Glory of God in the Perſon's Salvation. Do it not to get a Name, or Eſteem to thyſelf, or to bring Men to depend upon thee, or to get thee Followers, but in Obedience to Chriſt, in Imitation of him, and tender Love to Men's Souls. Do not as thoſe, who labour to reform their Children or Servants from ſuch Things as are againſt their own Profit or Humour, but never ſeek to ſave their Souls in the Way which God hath appointed.—— *Do it ſpeedily.* As you would

would not have them delay their Return, don't you delay to ſeek their Return. While you are purpoſing to teach and help him, the Man goes deeper in Debt; Wrath is heaping up; Sin taking Root; Cuſtom faſtens him; Temptations to Sin multiply; Conſcience grows ſeared; the Heart hardened; the Devil rules; Chriſt is ſhut out; the Spirit is reſiſted; God is daily diſhonoured; His Law violated; He is without a Servant, and that Service from him which he ſhould have; Time runs on; Death and Judgment are at the Door; and what if the Man die, and drop into Hell, while you are purpoſing to prevent it? If in the Caſe of his bodily Diſtreſs, you muſt *not ſay to him, go, and come again, and To-morrow I will give, when thou haſt it by thee* (a); how much leſs may you delay the Succour of his Soul? That Phyſician is no better than a Murderer, who negligently delayeth till his Patient be dead or paſt Cure. Lay by Excuſes then, and all leſſer Buſineſs, and *exhort one another daily, while it is called To-day; leſt any be hardened through the Deceitfulneſs of Sin* (b).——*Let your Exhortation proceed from Compaſſion and Love.* To jeer and ſcoff, to rail and vilify, is not a likely Way to reform Men, or convert them to God. Go to poor Sinners with Tears in your Eyes, that they may ſee you believe them to be miſerable, and that you unfeignedly pity their Caſe. Deal with them with earneſt humble Intreaties. Let

(a) Prov. iii. 28. (b) Heb. iii. 13.

them perceive it is the Desire of your Hearts to do them good; that you have no other End but their everlasting Happiness; and that it is your Sense of their Danger, and your Love to their Souls that forceth you to speak; even because you *know the Terrors of the Lord*, and for Fear you should see them in eternal Torments. Say to them, "Friend, you know I seek no Ad-"vantage of my own: The Method to please "you, and keep your Friendship, were to "sooth you in your Way, or let you alone; "but Love will not suffer me to see you perish, "and be silent. I seek nothing at your Hands, "but that which is necessary to your own Hap-"piness. It is yourself that will have the "Gain and Comfort, if you come to Christ." If we were thus to go to every ignorant, wicked Neighbour, what blessed Fruit should we quickly see!——*Do it with all Plainness and Faithfulness.* Don't make their Sins less than they are, nor encourage them in a false Hope. If you see the Case dangerous, speak plainly; "Neighbour, I am afraid God hath not yet re-"newed your Soul; I doubt you are not yet "recovered *from the Power of Satan to God*; "I doubt you have not chosen Christ above all, "nor unfeignedly taken him for your sove-"reign Lord. If you had, surely you durst "not so easily disobey him, nor neglect his "Worship in your Family, and in publick: "You could not so eagerly follow the World, "and talk of nothing but the Things of the

"World

" World. If you were *in Chriſt*, you would " be *a new Creature*; *old Things* would be *paſ-* " *ſed away*, *and all Things* would *become new*: " You would have new Thoughts, new Talk, " new Company, new Endeavours, and a new " Converſation: Certainly without theſe you " can never be ſaved: You may think other- " wiſe, and hope better as long as you will, " but your Hopes will all deceive you, and " periſh with you." Thus muſt you deal faith-fully with Men, if ever you intend to do them good. It is not in curing Men's Souls, as in curing their Bodies, where they muſt not know their Danger, leſt it hinder the Cure. They are here Agents in their own Cure, and if they know not their Miſery, they will never bewail it, nor know their Need of a Saviour.——*Do it alſo ſeriouſly, zealouſly, and effectually.* Labour to make Men know, that Heaven and Hell are not Matters to be played with, or paſſed over with a few careleſs Thoughts. " Is " it moſt certain, that one of theſe Days thou " ſhalt be in everlaſting Joy or Torment; and " doth it not awaken thee? Are there ſo few " that find the Way of Life? So many that go " the Way of Death? Is it ſo hard to eſcape? " So eaſy to miſcarry? And yet do you ſit ſtill " and trifle? What do you mean? The World " is paſſing away: Its Pleaſures, Honours, and " Profits are fading and leaving you: Eternity " is a little before you: God is juſt and jealous; " His Threatnings are true: The Great Day

" will be terrible: Time runs on: Your Life " is uncertain: You are far behind Hand: " Your Caſe is dangerous: If you die To- " morrow, how unready are you! With what " Terror will your Souls go out of your Bodies! " And do you yet loiter? Conſider, God is all " this while waiting your Leiſure: His Pa- " tience beareth: His Long-Suffering forbear- " eth: His Mercy intreateth you: Chriſt of- " fers you his Blood and Merits: The Spirit is " perſuading: Conſcience is accuſing: Satan " waits to have you: This is your Time; " Now or Never. Had you rather burn in " Hell than repent on Earth? have Devils your " Tormentors, than Chriſt your Governor? " Will you renounce your Part in God and " Glory, rather than renounce your Sins? O " Friends, what do you think of theſe Things? " God hath made you Men; do not renounce " your Reaſon, where you ſhould chiefly uſe " it." Alas, it is not a few dull Words be- tween jeſt and earneſt, between ſleep and awake, that will rouze a dead-hearted Sinner. If a Houſe be on fire, you will not make a cold Oration on the Nature and Danger of Fire; but will run, and cry, Fire, Fire. To tell a Man of his Sins, as ſoftly as *Eli* did his Sons; or reprove him, as gently as *Jehoſhaphat* did *Ahab*, *Let not the King ſay ſo*, uſually doth as much Harm as Good. Lothneſs to diſpleaſe Men, makes us undo them.

§ 6.

§ 6. YET leſt you run into Extremes, I adviſe you to *do it with Prudence and Diſcretion.* —— *Chuſe the fitteſt Seaſon.* Deal not with Men when they are in a Paſſion, or where they will take it for a Diſgrace. When the Earth is ſoft, the Plough will enter. Take a Man when he is under Affliction, or newly impreſſed under a Sermon. Chriſtian Faithfulneſs requires us, not only to do Good when it falls in our Way, but to watch for Opportunities.—— *Suit yourſelf alſo to the Quality and Temper of the Perſon.* You muſt deal with the *Ingenious*, more by *Argument* than *Perſuaſion.* There is need of *both* to the *Ignorant.* The *Affections* of the *Convinced* ſhould be chiefly excited. The *Obſtinate* muſt be *ſharply reproved.* The *Timorous* muſt be dealt-with *tenderly.* Love, and Plainneſs, and Seriouſneſs, take with all; but Words of Terror ſome can ſcarce bear. Uſe alſo the *apteſt Expreſſions.* Unſeemly Language makes the Hearers loath the Food they ſhould live by; eſpecially if they be Men of curious Ears, and carnal Hearts.— *Let all your Reproofs and Exhortations be backed with the Authority of God.* Let Sinners be convinced that you ſpeak not of your own Head. Turn them to the very *Chapter* and *Verſe* where their Sin is condemned, and their Duty commanded. The Voice of Man is contemptible, but the Voice of God is awful and terrible. They may reject your Words, that dare not reject the Words of the Almighty. —— *Be frequent*

quent with Men in this Duty of Exhortation. If we are *always to pray, and not to faint*, becauſe God would have us importunate with himſelf; the ſame Courſe, no doubt, will be moſt prevailing with Men. Therefore we are commanded to *exhort one another daily* (c); and *with all Long-ſuffering* (d). The Fire is not always brought out of the Flint at one Stroke; nor Men's Affections kindled at the firſt Exhortation. And if they were, yet if they be not followed, they will ſoon grow cold again. Follow Sinners with your loving and earneſt Intreaties, and give them no Reſt in their Sin. This is true Charity, the Way to ſave Men's Souls, and will afford you Comfort upon Review.——*Strive to bring all your Exhortations to an Iſſue.* If we ſpeak the moſt convincing Words, but all our Care is over with our Speech, we ſhall ſeldom proſper in our Labours: But God uſually bleſſes their Labours, whoſe very Heart is ſet upon the Converſion of their Hearers, and who are therefore enquiring after the Succeſs of their Work. If you reprove a Sin, ceaſe not till the Sinner promiſes you to leave it, and avoid the Occaſions of it. If you are exhorting to a Duty, urge for a Promiſe to ſet upon it preſently. If you would draw Men to Chriſt, leave not till you have made them confeſs the Miſery of their preſent unregenerate State, and the Neceſſity of Chriſt, and of a Change, and have promiſed you to fall cloſe to the

(c) Heb. iii. 13. (d) 2 Tim. iv. 2.

the Uſe of Means. O that all Chriſtians would take this Courſe with all their Neighbours that are enſlaved to Sin, and Strangers to Chriſt!— Once more, *be ſure your Example exhort as well as your Words.* Let them ſee you conſtant in all the Duties you perſuade them to. Let them ſee in your Lives that Superiority to the World, which your Lips recommend. Let them ſee by your conſtant Labours for Heaven, that you indeed believe what you would have them believe. A holy and heavenly Life, is a continual Pain to the Conſciences of Sinners around you, and continually ſollicits them to change their Courſe.

§ 7. (3) BESIDES the Duty of private Admonition, *you muſt endeavour to help Men to profit by the publick Ordinances.* In order to that, ——*endeavour to procure for them faithful Miniſters, where they are wanting. How ſhall they hear without a Preacher* (e)*?* Improve your Intereſt and Diligence to this End, till you prevail. Extend your Purſes to the utmoſt. How many Souls may be ſaved by the Miniſtry you have procured! It is a higher and nobler Charity, than relieving their Bodies. What Abundance of Good might great Men do, if they would ſupport in Academical Education, ſuch Youth as they have firſt carefully choſen for their Ingenuity and Piety, till they ſhould be fit for the Miniſtry?——*And when a faithful Miniſtry is obtained, help poor Souls to receive the Fruit*

(e) Rom. x. 14.

Fruit of it. Draw them conſtantly to attend it. Remind them often what they have heard; and, if it be poſſible, let them hear it repeated in their Families, or elſewhere. Promote their frequent Meeting together, beſides publickly in the Congregation; *not as a ſeparate Church, but as Part of the Church, more diligent than the reſt in redeeming Time, and helping the Souls of each other Heaven-ward.* —— *Labour alſo to keep the Ordinances and Miniſtry in Eſteem.* No Man will be much wrought on by that which he deſpiſeth. An *Apoſtle* ſays, *We beſeech you, Brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admoniſh you; and to eſteem them very highly in Love for their Work's Sake* (f).

§ 8. (II) Let us now a little enquire, *what may be the Cauſes of the groſs Neglect of this Duty*; that the Hindrances being diſcovered, may the more eaſily be overcome. —— *One Hindrance is, Men's own Sin and Guilt.* They have not themſelves been raviſhed with heavenly Delights; how then ſhould they draw others ſo earneſtly to ſeek them? They have not felt their own loſt Condition, nor their Need of Chriſt, nor the renewing Work of the Spirit; how then can they diſcover theſe to others? They are guilty of the Sins they ſhould reprove, and this makes them aſhamed to reprove. —— Another is, *a ſecret Infidelity prevailing in Men's Hearts.* Did we verily believe, that all the Unre-

(f) 1 Theſs. v. 12, 13.

Unregenerate and Unholy ſhall be eternally tormented, how could we hold our Tongues, or avoid burſting into Tears, when we look them in the Face? Eſpecially when they are our near and dear Friends? Thus doth ſecret Unbelief conſume the Vigour of each Grace and Duty. O *Chriſtians*, if you did verily believe, that your ungodly Neighbours, Wife, Husband, or Child, ſhould certainly lie for ever in Hell, except they be thoroughly changed before Death ſhall ſnatch them away, would not this make you addreſs them Day and Night till they were perſuaded? Were it not for this curſed Unbelief, our own and our Neighbour's Souls would gain more by us than they do.——*Theſe Attempts are alſo much hindered by our Want of Charity and Compaſſion for Men's Souls.* We *look on* miſerable Souls, *and paſs by*, as the *Prieſt* and *Levite* by the *wounded Man*. What tho' the Sinner, wounded by Sin, and captivated by Satan, do not deſire thy Help himſelf; yet his Miſery cries aloud. If God had not heard the Cry of our Miſeries, before he heard the Cry of our Prayers, and been moved by his own Pity, before he was moved by our Importunity, we might long have continued the Slaves of Satan. You will pray to God for them, to open their Eyes, and turn their Hearts; and why not endeavour their Converſion, if you deſire it? And if you do not deſire it, why do you ask it? Why do you not pray them to conſider and return, as well

as

as pray God to convert and turn them? If you ſhould ſee your Neighbour fallen into a Pit, and ſhould pray to God to help him out, but neither put forth your Hand to help him, nor once direct him to help himſelf, would not any Man cenſure you for your Cruelty and Hypocriſy? It is as true of the Soul as the Body, If any Man *ſeeth his Brother have Need, and ſhutteth up his Bowels of Compaſſion from him, how dwelleth the Love of God in him?* or what Love hath he to his Brother's Soul?——*We are alſo hindered by a baſe, Man-pleaſing Diſpoſition.* We are ſo deſirous to keep in Credit and Favour with Men, that it makes us moſt unconſcionably neglect our known Duty. He is a fooliſh and unfaithful Phyſician, that will let a ſick Man die for fear of troubling him. If our Friends are diſtracted, we pleaſe them in nothing that tends to their Hurt. And yet when they are beſide themſelves in Point of Salvation, and in their Madneſs poſting on to Damnation, we will not ſtop them, for fear of diſpleaſing them. How can we be Chriſtians, that *love the Praiſe of Men more than the Praiſe of God?* For if we *ſeek to pleaſe Men, we ſhall not be the Servants of Chriſt.*——*It is common to be hindered by ſinful Baſhfulneſs.* When we ſhould ſhame Men out of their Sins, we are ourſelves aſhamed of our Duties May not theſe Sinners condemn us, when they bluſh not to ſwear, be drunk, or neglect the Worſhip of God; and we bluſh to tell them of it, and perſuade

ſuade them from it? Baſhfulneſs is unſeemly in Caſes of Neceſſity. It is not a Work to be aſhamed of, to obey God in perſuading Men from their Sins to Chriſt. *Reader*, hath not thy Conſcience told thee of thy Duty many a Time, and put thee on to ſpeak to poor Sinners; and yet thou haſt been aſhamed to open thy Mouth, and ſo let them alone to ſink or ſwim? O read and tremble, *Whoſoever ſhall be aſhamed of me, and my Words, in this adulterous and ſinful Generation, of him alſo ſhall the Son of Man be aſhamed, when he cometh in the Glory of his Father, with the holy Angels* (g).——*An idle and impatient Spirit hindereth us.* It is an ungrateful Work, and ſometimes makes Men our Enemies. Beſides, it ſeldom ſucceeds at the firſt, except it be followed on. You muſt be long teaching the Ignorant, and perſuading the Obſtinate. We conſider not what Patience God uſed towards us, when we were in our Sins. Woe to us, if God had been as impatient with us, as we were with others ——*Another Hinderance is, Self-ſeeking. All ſeek their own, not the Things which are Jeſus Chriſt's* (h), and their Brethren's.——*With many, Pride is a great Impediment.* If it were to ſpeak with a great Man, and it would not diſpleaſe him, they would do it. But to go among the Poor, and take Pains with them in their Cottages; where is the Perſon that will do it? Many will rejoice in being inſtrumental to convert a Gentleman; and they have

(g) Mark viii. 38. (h) Phil. ii. 21.

have good Reaſon; but overlook the Multitude; as if the Souls of all were not alike to God. Alas, theſe Men little conſider how low Chriſt ſtooped to us! Few *rich*, and *noble*, and *wiſe are called*. It is the Poor that receive the glad Tidings of the Goſpel.——*And with ſome their Ignorance of the Duty hindereth them from performing it*. Either they know it not to be a Duty, or at leaſt not to be their Duty. If this be thy Caſe, *Reader*, I am in Hope thou art now acquainted with thy Duty and will ſet upon it.

§ 9. Don't object to this Duty, that *you are unable to manage an Exhortation*; but either ſet thoſe on the Work who are more able, or faithfully and humbly uſe the ſmall Ability you have, and tell them, as a weak Man may do, what God ſays in his Word.——Decline not the Duty, becauſe *it is your Superior who needs Advice and Exhortation*. Order muſt be diſpenſed with in Caſes of Neceſſity. Though it be a Husband, a Parent, a Miniſter, you muſt teach him in ſuch a Caſe. If Parents are in Want, Children muſt relieve them. If a Husband be ſick, the Wife muſt fill up his Place in Family-Affairs. If the Rich are reduced to Beggary, they muſt receive Charity. If the Phyſician be ſick, ſomebody muſt look to him. So the meaneſt Servant muſt admoniſh his Maſter, and the Child his Parent, and the Wife her Husband, and the People their Miniſter; ſo that it be done when there is real Need, dan with all poſſible Humility, Modeſty, and Meek-

Meekneſs.——Don't ſay, *this will make us all Preachers*; for every good Chriſtian is a Teacher, and hath a Charge of his Neighbour's Soul. Every Man is a Phyſician, when a regular Phyſician cannot be had, and when the Hurt is ſo ſmall that any Man may relieve it; and in the ſame Caſes every Man muſt be a Teacher.——Don't *deſpair of Succeſs*. Cannot God give it? And muſt it not be by Means? ——Don't plead, *it will only be caſting Pearls before Swine*. When you are in Danger to be torn in Pieces, Chriſt would have you forbear; but what is that to you that are in no ſuch Danger? As long as they will hear, you have Encouragement to ſpeak, and may not caſt them off as contemptible Swine.——Say not, *it is a Friend on whom I much depend, and by telling him his Sin and Miſery, I may loſe his Love, and be undone.* Is his Love more to be valued than his Safety? or thy own Benefit by him, than the Salvation of his Soul? or wilt thou connive at his Damnation, becauſe he is thy Friend? Is that thy beſt Requital of his Friendſhip? Hadſt thou rather he ſhould burn in Hell for ever, than thou ſhouldſt loſe his Favour, or the Maintenance thou haſt from him?

§ 10. (III) But that all who fear God may be excited to do their utmoſt to help others to this bleſſed Reſt, let me intreat you to *conſider the following Motives.* As for Inſtance.——*Not only Nature, but eſpecially Grace, diſpoſes the Soul to be communicative of Good.* Therefore to

neglect this Work is a Sin both againſt Nature and Grace. Would you not think him unnatural, that would ſuffer his Children or Neighbours to ſtarve in the Streets, while he has Proviſion at Hand? And is not he more unnatural, that will let them eternally periſh, and not open his Mouth to ſave them? An unmerciful, cruel Man, is a Monſter, to be abhorred of all. If God had bid you give them all your Eſtates, or lay down your Lives, to ſave them, you would ſurely have refuſed, when you will not beſtow a little Breath to ſave them. Is not the Soul of a Husband, or Wife, or Child, or Neighbour, worth a few Words? Cruelty to Men's Bodies is a moſt damnable Sin; but to their Souls much more, as the Soul is of greater Worth than the Body, and Eternity than Time. Little know you what many a Soul may now be feeling in Hell, who died in their Sins, for Want of your faithful Admonition.——*Conſider what Chriſt did towards the ſaving of Souls.* He thought them worth his Blood; and ſhall we not think them worth our Breath? Will you not do a little, where Chriſt hath done ſo much? ——*Conſider what fit Objects of Pity ungodly Souls are.* They are dead in Treſpaſſes and Sins, have not Hearts to feel their Miſeries, nor to pity themſelves. If others do not pity them, they will have no Pity; for it is the Nature of their Diſeaſe to make them pityleſs to themſelves, yea their own moſt cruel Deſtroyers. ——*Conſider it was once thy own Caſe.* It was God's

God's Argument to the *Iſraelites*, to be kind to Strangers, becauſe themſelves had been *Strangers in the Land of Egypt*. So ſhould you pity them that are Strangers to Chriſt, and to the Hopes and Comforts of the Saints, becauſe you were once Strangers to them yourſelves.—— *Conſider your Relation to them.* It is thy Neighbour, thy Brother, whom thou art bound to love as thyſelf. *He that loveth not his Brother whom he ſeeth* daily, *doth not love God whom he* never *ſaw.* And doth he love his Brother, that will ſee him go to Hell, and never hinder him?

§ 11. ——*Conſider what a Load of Guilt this Neglect lays upon thy own Soul.* Thou art guilty of the Murder and Damnation of all thoſe Souls whom thou doſt thus neglect; and of every Sin they now commit; and of all the Diſhonour done to God thereby; and of all thoſe Judgments which their Sins bring upon the Town or Country where they live.—— *Conſider what it will be, to look upon your poor Friends in eternal Flames, and to think that your Neglect was a great Cauſe of it.* If you ſhould there periſh with them, it would be no ſmall Aggravation of your Torment. If you be in Heaven, it would ſure be a ſad Thought, were it poſſible that any Sorrow could dwell there, to hear a Multitude of poor Souls cry out for ever, " O, if you would but have told me " plainly of my Sin and Danger, and ſet it " home, I might have eſcaped all this Tor- " ment, and been now in Reſt!" What a ſad

Voice will this be!——*Conſider what a Joy it will be in Heaven, to meet thoſe there, whom you have been the Means to bring thither.* To ſee their Faces, and join with them for ever in the Praiſes of God, whom you were the happy Inſtruments of bringing to the Knowledge and Obedience of Jeſus Chriſt!—*Conſider how many Souls you may have drawn into the Way of Damnation, or hardened in it.* We have had, in the Days of our Ignorance, our Companions in Sin, whom we inticed, or encouraged. And doth it not become us, to do as much to ſave Men, as we have done to deſtroy them?—— *Conſider how diligent are all the Enemies of theſe poor Souls to draw them to Hell.* The Devil is tempting them Day and Night: Their inward Luſts are ſtill working for their Ruin: The Fleſh is ſtill pleading for its Delights: Their old Companions are increaſing their Diſlike of Holineſs. And if no Body be diligent in helping them to Heaven, what is like to become of them?

§ 12. ——*Conſider how deep the Neglect of this Duty will wound, when Conſcience is awakened.* When a Man comes to die, Conſcience will ask him, "What Good haſt thou done in thy "Life-Time? The ſaving of Souls is the "greateſt good Work; what haſt thou done "towards it? How many haſt thou dealt faith-"fully with?" I have oft obſerved, that the Conſciences of dying Men very much wound them for this Omiſſion. For my own Part, when I have been near Death, my Conſcience hath

hath accuſed me more for this than for any Sin: It would bring every ignorant profane Neighbour to my Remembrance, to whom I never made known their Danger: It would tell me, "thou ſhouldſt have gone to them in private, "and told them plainly of their deſperate Dan-"ger, though it had been when thou ſhouldſt "have eaten or ſlept, if thou hadſt no other "Time." Conſcience would remind me, how at ſuch, or ſuch a Time, I was in Company with the Ignorant, or was riding by the Way with a wilful Sinner, and had a fit Opportunity to have dealt with him, but did not; or at leaſt did it to little Purpoſe. The Lord grant I may better obey Conſcience while I have Time, that it may have leſs to accuſe me of at Death!——*Conſider what a ſeaſonable Time you now have for this Work.* There are Times in which it is not ſafe to ſpeak; it may coſt you your Liberties or your Lives. Beſides, your Neighbours will ſhortly die, and ſo will you. Speak to them therefore while you may.——*Conſider, tho' this is a Work of greateſt Charity, yet every one of you may perform it.* The pooreſt, as well as the Rich. Every one hath a Tongue to ſpeak to a Sinner.——Once more, *conſider the happy Conſequences of this Work where it is faithfully done.* You may be inſtrumental of ſaving Souls, for which Chriſt came down and died, and in which the Angels of God rejoice. Such Souls will bleſs you here and hereafter. God will have much Glory by it. The Church

will be multiplied and edified by it. Your own Souls will enjoy more Improvement and Vigour in a divine Life, more Peace of Conſcience, more rejoicing in Spirit. Of all the perſonal Mercies that I ever received, next to the Love of God in Chriſt to my own Soul, I muſt moſt joyfully bleſs him for the plentiful Succeſs of my Endeavours upon others. O what Fruits then might I have ſeen, if I had been more faithful! I know we need to be very jealous of our deceitful Hearts in this Point, leſt our rejoicing ſhould come from our Pride. Naturally we would have the Praiſe of every good Work aſcribed to ourſelves: Yet to imitate our Father in Goodneſs and Mercy, and to rejoice in the Degree of them we attain to, is the Duty of every Child of God. I therefore tell you my own Experience, to perſuade you, that if you did but know what a joyful Thing it is, you would follow it Night and Day through the greateſt Diſcouragements.

§ 13. Up then, *every Man* that hath a Tongue, and is *a Servant of Chriſt*, and do ſomething of your Maſter's Work. Why hath he given you a Tongue, but to ſpeak in his Service? And how can you ſerve him more eminently, than in ſaving Souls? He that will pronounce you bleſſed at the laſt Day, and invite you to the *Kingdom prepared for you*, becauſe you *fed him, and cloathed him, and viſited him*, in his poor Members, will ſurely pronounce you bleſſed for ſo great a Work as bringing

ing Souls to his Kingdom. He that ſaith, *the Poor you have always with you*, hath left the Ungodly always with you, that you might ſtill have Matter to exerciſe your Charity upon. If you have the Hearts of *Chriſtians*, or of *Men*, let them yearn towards your ignorant, ungodly Neighbours. Say, as the *Lepers* of *Samaria*, *We do not well; this Day is a Day of good Tidings, and we hold our Peace.* Hath God had ſo much Mercy on you, and will you have no Mercy on your poor Neighbours?—— But as this Duty belongs to all Chriſtians, ſo eſpecially to ſome, according as God hath called them to it, or qualified them for it. To them therefore I will *more particularly addreſs the Exhortation.*

§ 14. *God eſpecially expects this Duty at your Hands, to whom he hath given more Learning and Knowledge, and enduced with better Utterance, than your Neighbours.* The Strong are made to help the Weak; and thoſe that ſee muſt direct the Blind. God looketh for this faithful Improvement of your Parts and Gifts, which, if you neglect, it were better you had never received them; for they will but aggravate your Condemnation, and be as uſeleſs to your own Salvation, as they were to others.

§ 15. *All thoſe that are particularly acquainted with ſome ungodly Men, and that have peculiar Intereſt in them, God looks for this Duty at your Hands.* Chriſt himſelf did eat and drink with *Publicans* and *Sinners*; but it was only to

be their *Phyſician*, and not their *Companion*. Who knows but God gave you Intereſt in them to this End, that you might be the Means of their Recovery? They that will not regard the Words of a Stranger, may regard a Brother, or Siſter, or Husband, or Wife, or near Friend: Beſides that the Bond of Friendſhip engageth you to more Kindneſs and Compaſſion than ordinary.

§ 16. *Phyſicians, that are much about dying Men, ſhould in a ſpecial Manner make Conſcience of this Duty.* It is their peculiar Advantage, that they are *at Hand*; that they are with Men *in Sickneſs and Dangers*, when the Ear is more open, and the Heart leſs ſtubborn than in Time of Health; and that Men look upon their *Phyſician* as a Perſon *in whoſe Hands is their Life*; or at leaſt, who may do much to ſave them; and therefore they will the more regard his Advice. You that are of this *honourable Profeſſion*, don't think this a Work beſide your Calling, as if it belonged to none but *Miniſters*; except you think it beſide your Calling to be compaſſionate, or to be *Chriſtians*. O help therefore to fit your Patients for Heaven! And whether you ſee they are for Life or Death, teach them both how to live and die, and give them ſome *Phyſick* for their Souls, as you do for their Bodies. Bleſſed be God, that very many of the chief Phyſicians of this Age, have, by their eminent Piety, vindicated their Profeſſion from the common Imputation of Atheiſm and Profaneneſs!

§ 17.

§ 17. *Men of Wealth and Authority, and that have many Dependants, have excellent Advantages for this Duty.* O what a World of Good might Lords and Gentlemen do, if they had but Hearts to improve their Influence over others! Have you not all your Honour and Riches from God? Doth not Chriſt ſay, *unto whomſoever much is given, of him much ſhall be required?* If you ſpeak to your Dependants for God and their Souls, you may be regarded, when even a Miniſter ſhall be deſpiſed. As you value the Honour of God, your own Comfort, and the Salvation of Souls, improve your Influence over your Tenants and Neighbours; viſit their Houſes; ſee whether they worſhip God in their Families; and take all Opportunities to preſs them to their Duty. Deſpiſe them not. Remember God is no Reſpecter of Perſons. Let Men ſee that you excell others in Piety, Compaſſion, and Diligence in God's Work, as you do in the Riches and Honours of the World. I confeſs you will by this Means be ſingular, but then you will be ſingular in Glory; for few of the *Mighty and Noble are called.*

§ 18. *As for the Miniſters of the Goſpel, it is the very Work of their Calling, to help others to Heaven.*——Be ſure to *make it the main End of* your *Studies and Preaching* He is the able, skilful Miniſter, that is beſt skilled in the Art of inſtructing, convincing, perſuading, and conſequently of winning Souls; and that is the beſt Sermon that is beſt in theſe. When you ſeek not

not God, but yourſelves, God will make you the moſt contemptible of Men. It is true of your Reputation, what Chriſt ſays of your Life, *He that loveth it, ſhall loſe it.* Let the Vigour of your Perſuaſions ſhew, that you are ſenſible on how weighty a Buſineſs you are ſent. Preach with that Seriouſneſs and Fervour, as Men that believe their own Doctrine, and that know their Hearers muſt be prevail'd with, or be damned. ——*Think not that all your Work is in your Studies and Pulpit.* You are *Shepherds*, and muſt know every Sheep, and what is their Diſeaſe, and mark their Strayings, and help to cure them and fetch them home. Learn of *Paul*, not only *to teach your People publickly*, but *from Houſe to Houſe.* Enquire how they grow in Knowledge and Holineſs, and on what Grounds they build their Hopes of Salvation, and whether they walk uprightly, and perform the Duties of their ſeveral Relations. See whether they worſhip God in their Families, and teach them how to do it. Be familiar with them, that you may maintain your Intereſt in them, and improve it all for God. Know of them how they profit by publick Teaching. If any too little *ſavour the Things of the Spirit*, let them be pitied, but not neglected. If any *walk diſorderly*, recover them with Diligence and Patience. If they be ignorant, it may be your Fault, as much as theirs. Be not aſleep while the Wolf is waking.——*Deal not ſlightly with any.* Some will not tell their People plainly of their Sins, becauſe

becauſe they are great Men; and ſome becauſe they are godly; as if none but the Poor and the Wicked ſhould be dealt plainly with.——Yet *labour to be skilfull and diſcreet*, that the *Manner* may anſwer to the Excellency of the *Matter*. Every reaſonable Soul hath both *Judgment* and *Affection*; and every rational, ſpiritual Sermon, muſt have both. Study and pray, and pray and ſtudy, till you are become *Workmen that need not be aſhamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth*; that your People may not be aſhamed, nor weary in hearing you.——*Let your Converſation be teaching, as well as your Doctrine*. Be as forward in a holy and heavenly Life as you are in preſſing others to it. Let your Diſcourſe be edifying and ſpiritual. Suffer any Thing, rather than the Goſpel and Men's Souls ſhould ſuffer. Let Men ſee that you uſe not the Miniſtry only for a Trade to live by; but that your Hearts are ſet upon the Welfare of Souls. Whatſoever Meekneſs, Humility, Condeſcention, or Self-denial you teach them from the Goſpel, teach it them alſo by your undiſſembled Example.——*Study and ſtrive after Unity and Peace*. If ever you would promote the Kingdom of Chriſt, and your People's Salvation, do it in a Way of Peace and Love. It is as hard a Thing to maintain in your People a ſound Underſtanding, a tender Conſcience, a lively, gracious, heavenly Frame of Spirit, and an upright Life, amidſt Contention, as to keep your Candle lighted

lighted in the greateſt Storms. *Bleſſed is that Servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, ſhall find ſo doing.*

§ 19. *All you whom God hath intruſted with the Care of Children or Servants,* I would alſo perſuade to this great Work of helping others to the heavenly Reſt.——*Conſider, what plain and preſſing Commands of God require this at your Hands. Theſe Words thou ſhalt teach diligently unto thy Children, and ſhalt talk of them when thou ſitteſt in thine Houſe, and when thou walkeſt by the Way, and when thou lieſt down, and when thou riſeſt up* (i). *Train up a Child in the Way he ſhould go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it* (k). *Bring up your Children in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord* (l). *Joſhua* reſolved, that *he and his Houſe would ſerve the Lord* (m). And God himſelf ſays of *Abraham, I know him, that he will command his Children, and his Houſhold after him, and they ſhall keep the Way of the Lord* (n).——*Conſider, it is a Duty you owe your Children in Point of Juſtice.* From you they received the Defilement and Miſery of their Natures; and therefore you owe them all poſſible Help for their Recovery.——*Conſider, how near your Children are to you.* They are Parts of yourſelves. If they proſper when you are dead, you take it as if you lived and proſpered in them; and ſhould you not be of the ſame Mind for their everlaſting Reſt?——*Other-*

(i) Deut. vi. 6, 7. (k) Prov. xxii. 6. (l) Ephes. vi. 4.
(m) Joſh. xxiv. 15. (n) Gen. xviii. 19.

Otherwiſe you will be Witneſſes againſt your own Souls. Your Care, and Pains, and Coſt for their Bodies, will condemn you for your Neglect of their precious Souls.——*Yea, all the brute Creatures may condemn you.* Which of them is not tender of their Young?—— *Conſider, God hath made your Children your Charge, and your Servants too.* Every one will confeſs they are the Miniſter's Charge. And have not you a greater Charge of your own Families, than any Miniſter can have of them? Doubtleſs at your Hands God will require the Blood of their Souls. It is the greateſt Charge you were ever intruſted with; and woe to you, if you ſuffer them to be ignorant or wicked for Want of your Inſtruction or Correction.—*Conſider, what Work there is for you in their Diſpoſitions and Lives.* There is not one Sin, but thouſands. They are hereditary Diſeaſes bred in their Natures. The Things you muſt teach them are contrary to the Intereſt and Deſires of their Fleſh. May the Lord make you ſenſible what a Work and Charge lieth upon you!——*Conſider, what Sorrows you prepare for yourſelves by the Neglect of your Children.* If they prove Thorns in your Eyes, they are of your own planting. If you ſhould repent and be ſaved, is it nothing to think of their Damnation; and yourſelves the Occaſions of it? But if you die in your Sins, how will they cry out againſt you in Hell! "All this was long of you; you "ſhould have taught us better, and did not;

"you

" you ſhould have reſtrained us from Sin, " and corrected us, but did not." What an Addition will ſuch Out-cries be to your Miſery? —— On the other Side, *think what a Comfort you may have, if you be faithful in this Duty.* If you ſhould not ſucceed, you have freed your own Souls, and have Peace in your own Conſciences. If you do, the Comfort is inexpreſſible, in their Love and Obedience, their ſupplying your Wants, and delighting you in all your remaining Path to Glory. Yea, all your Family may fare the better for one pious Child or Servant. But the greateſt Joy will be, when you ſhall ſay, *Lord, here am I, and the Children thou haſt given me*; and ſhall joyfully live with them for ever.—— *Conſider how much the Welfare of Church and State depends on this Duty.* Good Laws will not reform us, if Reformation begin not at Home. This is the Cauſe of all our Miſeries in Church and State, even the Want of a holy Education of Children.——*I alſo intreat Parents to conſider, what excellent Advantages they have for ſaving their Children.* They are with you while they are tender and flexible. You have a Twig to bend, not an Oak. None in the World have ſuch Intereſt in their Affections as you have. You have alſo the greateſt Authority over them. Their whole Dependance is upon you for a Maintenance. You beſt know their Temper and Inclinations. And you are ever with them, and can never want Opportunities: Eſpecially you

Mothers

Mothers, remember this, who are more with your Children while young, than their Fathers. What Pains are you at for their Bodies? What do you ſuffer to bring them into the World? And will you not be at as much Pains for the ſaving of their Souls? Your Affections are tender; and will it not move you to think of their periſhing for ever? I beſeech you, for the Sake of the Children of your Bowels, teach them, admoniſh them, watch over them, and give them no Reſt, till you have brought them to Chriſt.

§ 20. *I ſhall conclude with this earneſt Requeſt to all Chriſtian Parents that read theſe Lines; that they would have Compaſſion on the Souls of their poor Children, and be faithful to the great Truſt that God hath put on them.* If you cannot do what you would for them, yet do what you can. Both Church and State, City and Country, groan under the Neglect of this weighty Duty. Your Children know not God, nor his Laws, but *take his Name in vain*, and ſlight his Worſhip, and you neither inſtruct, nor correct them; and therefore God corrects both them and you. You are ſo tender of them, that God is the leſs tender both of them and you. Wonder not if God make you ſmart for your Children's Sins; for you are guilty of all they commit, by your Neglect of your Duty to reform them. Will you reſolve therefore to ſet upon this Duty, and neglect it no longer? Remember *Eli*. Your Children are like *Moſes* in the Bulruſhes, ready to periſh if they have not Help. As ever you would not be charged before God as Murde-

rers

rers of their Souls, nor have them cry out againſt you in everlaſting Fire, ſee that you teach them how to eſcape it, and bring them up in Holineſs, and the Fear of God. I charge every one of you, upon your Allegiance to God, as you will very ſhortly anſwer the contrary at your Peril, that you will neither refuſe nor neglect this moſt neceſſary Duty. If you are not willing to do it, now you know it to be ſo great a Duty, you are Rebels, and no true Subjects of Jeſus Chriſt. If you are willing, but know not how, I will add a few Words of Direction to help you. *Lead them, by your own Examples, to Prayer, Reading, and other religious Duties. Inform their Underſtandings. Store their Memories. Rectify their Wills. Quicken their Affections. Keep tender their Conſciencies. Reſtrain their Tongues, and teach them gracious Speech. Reform and watch over their outward Converſation.* To theſe Ends, *get them Bibles and pious Books, and ſee that they read them. Examine them often what they learn: Eſpecially ſpend the Lord's Day in this Work, and ſuffer them not to ſpend it in Sports or Idleneſs. Shew them the Meaning of what they read or learn. Keep them out of evil Company, and acquaint them with the Godly. And fail not to make them learn their Catechiſm. Eſpecially ſhew them the Neceſſity, Excellency, and Pleaſure of ſerving God; and labour to fix all upon their Hearts.*

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

The Saints Reſt is not to be expected on Earth.

§ 1. *In order to ſhew the Sin and Folly of expecting Reſt here,* § 2. (I) *the Reaſonableneſs of preſent Afflictions is conſidered;* § 3. (1) *that they are the Way to Reſt,* § 4. (2) *keep us from miſtaking our Reſt,* § 5. (3) *from loſing our Way to it,* § 6. (4) *quicken our Pace towards it,* § 7. (5) *chiefly incommode our Fleſh,* § 8, 9, *and* (6) *under them the ſweeteſt Foretaſtes of Reſt are often enjoyed.* § 10. (II) *How unreaſonable to reſt in preſent Enjoyments:* § 11 (1) *that 'tis Idolatry;* § 12. (2) *that it contradicts God's End in giving them;* § 13. (3) *is the Way to have them refuſed, withdrawn, or imbittered;* § 14. (4) *that to be ſuffered to take up our Reſt here is the greateſt Curſe;* § 15. (5) *that 'tis ſeeking Reſt where it is not;* § 16. (6) *that the Creatures, without God, would aggravate our Miſery;* § 17. (7) *and all this is confirmed by Experience.* § 18. *The Author laments that this is nevertheleſs a moſt common Sin.* § 19—23. (III) *How unreaſonable our Unwillingneſs to die, and poſſeſs the Saints Reſt is, largely conſidered.* § 24. *The Author apologizes for ſaying ſo much on this laſt Head.*

§ 1. WE are not yet come to our *reſting Place*. Doth it *remain?* How great then is our Sin and Folly to ſeek and expect it here? Where ſhall we find the *Chriſtian* that deſerves not this Reproof? We would all have continual Proſperity, becauſe it is eaſy and pleaſing to the Fleſh; but we conſider not the Unreaſonableneſs of ſuch Deſires. And when we enjoy convenient Houſes, Goods, Lands and Revenues; or the neceſſary Means God hath appointed for our ſpiritual Good; we ſeek Reſt in theſe Enjoyments. Whether we are in an afflicted, or proſperous State, it is apparent, we exceedingly make the Creature our Reſt. Do we not deſire Creature-Enjoyments more violently, when we want them, than we deſire God himſelf? Do we not delight more in the Poſſeſſion of them, than in the Enjoyment of God? And if we loſe them, doth it not trouble us more than our Loſs of God? Is it not enough, that they are refreſhing Helps in our Way to Heaven, but they muſt alſo be made our Heaven itſelf? *Chriſtian Reader*, I would as willingly make thee ſenſible of this Sin, as of any Sin in the World, if I could tell how to do it; for the Lord's greateſt Quarrel with us is in this Point. In order to this, I moſt earneſtly beſeech thee to conſider, ——*the Reaſonableneſs of preſent Afflictions*, ——and *the Unreaſonableneſs of reſting in preſent Enjoyments*; —— *as alſo of our Un-*

Unwillingneſs to die, that we may poſſeſs eternal Reſt.

§ 2. (1) To ſhew *the Reaſonableneſs of preſent Afflictions*, conſider,——they are *the Way to Reſt*;——they *keep us from miſtaking our Reſt*,——*and from loſing our Way to it*;——they *quicken our Pace towards it*;——they *chiefly incommode our Fleſh*;—— and *under them God's People have often the ſweeteſt Foretaſtes of their Reſt.*

§ 3. (1) *Conſider, that Labour and Trouble are the common Way to Reſt*, both in the Courſe of Nature and Grace. Can there poſſibly be Reſt without Wearineſs? Do you not travel and toil firſt, and reſt after? The Day for Labour is firſt, and then follows the Night for Reſt. Why ſhould we deſire the Courſe of Grace to be perverted, any more than the Courſe of Nature? It is an eſtabliſhed Decree, *that we muſt through much Tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God* (a). And that *if we ſuffer, we ſhall alſo reign with Chriſt* (b). And what are we, that God's Statutes ſhould be reverſed for our Pleaſure?

§ 4. (2) *Afflictions are exceeding uſeful to us, to keep us from miſtaking our Reſt.* A Chriſtian's Motion towards Heaven is voluntary, and not conſtrained. Thoſe Means therefore are moſt profitable, which help his Underſtanding and Will. The moſt dangerous Miſtake of our Souls is, to take the Creature for God, and

(a) Acts xiv. 22. (b) 2 Tim. ii. 12.

Earth for Heaven. What warm, affectionate, eager Thoughts have we of the World, till Afflictions cool and moderate them? Afflictions ſpeak convincingly, and will be heard when Preachers cannot. Many a poor Chriſtian is ſometime bending his Thoughts to Wealth, or Fleſh-pleaſing, or Applauſe; and ſo loſes his Reliſh of Chriſt, and the Joy above; till God break in upon his Riches, or Children, or Conſcience, or Health, and break down his Mountain which he thought ſo ſtrong: And then, when he lieth in *Manaſſeh*'s Fetters, or is faſtened to his Bed with pining Sickneſs, the World is nothing, and Heaven is ſomething. If our dear Lord did not put theſe Thorns under our Head, we ſhould ſleep out our Lives, and loſe our Glory.

§ 5. (3) *Afflictions are alſo God's moſt effectual Means to keep us from loſing our Way to our Reſt.* Without this Hedge of Thorns, on the right Hand and left, we ſhould hardly keep the Way to Heaven. If there be but one Gap open, how ready are we to find it, and turn out at it? When we grow wanton, or worldly, or proud, how doth Sickneſs, or other Affliction, reduce us? Every *Chriſtian*, as well as *Luther*, may call Affliction one of his beſt School-maſters; and with *David* may ſay, *Before I was afflicted, I went aſtray; but now have I kept thy Word* (c). Many thouſand recovered Sinners may cry, "O healthful Sickneſs! O comfor-

"table

(c) Pſalm cxix. 67.

" table Sorrows! O gainful Loſſes! O enrich-
" ing Poverty! O bleſſed Day that ever I was
" afflicted!" Not only the *green Paſtures*, and *ſtill Waters*, but *the Rod and Staff, they comfort us.* Though the Word and Spirit do the main Work, yet Suffering ſo unbolts the Door of the Heart, that the Word hath eaſier Entrance.

§ 6. (4) *Afflictions likewiſe ſerve to quicken our Pace in the Way to our Reſt.* It were well, if mere Love would prevail with us, and that we were rather drawn to Heaven, than driven. But ſeeing our Hearts are ſo bad that Mercy will not do it; it is better be put on with the ſharpeſt Scourge, than loiter, like *the fooliſh Virgins*, till *the Door is ſhut.* O what Difference is there, betwixt our Prayers in Health, and in Sickneſs; betwixt our Repentings in Proſperity and Adverſity! Alas! if we did not ſometime feel the Spur, what a ſlow Pace would moſt of us hold toward Heaven? Since our vile Natures require it, why ſhould we be unwilling that God ſhould do us Good by ſharp Means? Judge, *Chriſtian*, whether thou doſt not go more watchfully and ſpeedily in the Way to Heaven, in thy Sufferings, than in thy more pleaſing and proſperous State.

§ 7. (5) *Conſider further, it is but the Fleſh that is chiefly troubled and grieved by Affliction.* In moſt of our Sufferings the Soul is free, unleſs we ourſelves wilfully afflict it. " Why then,
" O my Soul, doſt thou ſide with this Fleſh,
" and complain, as it complaineth? It ſhould

" be thy Work to *keep it under, and bring it*
" *into Subjection*; and if God do it for thee,
" ſhouldſt thou be diſcontented? Hath not the
" pleaſing of it been the Cauſe of almoſt all thy
" ſpiritual Sorrows? Why then may not the
" diſpleaſing of it further thy Joys? Muſt not
" *Paul and Silas ſing*, becauſe *their Feet are in*
" *the Stocks?* Their Spirits were not impriſoned.
" Ah, unworthy Soul! is this thy Thanks to
" God for preferring thee ſo far before thy Bo-
" dy? When it is rotting in the Grave, thou
" ſhalt be a Companion of the perfected Spi-
" rits of the Juſt. In the mean Time, haſt
" thou not Conſolation which the Fleſh knows
" not of? Murmur not then at God's Dealings
" with thy Body; if it were for Want of Love
" to thee, he would not have dealt ſo by all his
" Saints. Never expect thy Fleſh ſhould truly
" expound the Meaning of the Rod. It will
" call Love, Hatred; and ſay, God is deſtroy-
" ing, when he is ſaving. It is the ſuffering
" Party, and therefore not fit to be the Judge."
Could we once believe God, and judge of his Dealings by his Word, and by their Uſefulneſs to our Souls, and Reference to our Reſt, and could we ſtop our Ears againſt all the Clamours of the Fleſh, then we ſhould have a truer Judgment of our Afflictions.

§ 8. (6) Once more *conſider, God ſeldom gives his People ſo ſweet a Fore-taſte of their future Reſt, as in their deep Afflictions.* He keeps his moſt precious Cordials for the Time of our greateſt

greateſt Faintings and Dangers. He gives them, when he knows they are needed, and will be valued; and when He is ſure to be thanked for them, and his People rejoiced by them. Eſpecially when our Sufferings are more directly for his Cauſe, then He ſeldom fails to ſweeten the bitter Cup. The *Martyrs* have poſſeſſed the higheſt Joys. When did Chriſt preach ſuch Comforts to his Diſciples, as when *their Hearts were ſorrowful* at his Departure? When did He appear among them, and ſay, *Peace be unto you*, but when they were ſhut up for fear of the *Jews?* When did *Stephen ſee Heaven opened*, but when he was giving up his Life for the Teſtimony of Jeſus? Is not that our beſt State, wherein we have moſt of God? Why elſe do we deſire to come to Heaven? If we look for a Heaven of fleſhly Delights, we ſhall find ourſelves miſtaken. Conclude then, that Affliction is not ſo bad a State for a Saint in his Way to Reſt. Are we wiſer than God? Doth He not know what is good for us as well as we? or is He not as careful of our Good, as we of our own? Woe to us, if He were not much more ſo! and if He did not love us better, than we love either Him, or ourſelves!

§ 9 SAY not, "I could bear any other Af-"fliction but this." If God had afflicted thee where thou canſt bear it, thy Idol would neither have been diſcovered, nor removed. Neither ſay, "If God would deliver me out of it, "I could be content to bear it." Is it nothing

that He hath promiſed, it *ſhall work for thy Good?* Is it not enough that thou art ſure to be delivered at Death? Nor let it be ſaid, "If my "Affliction did not diſable me for Duty, I could "bear it." It doth not diſable thee for that Duty which tendeth to thy own perſonal Benefit, but is the greateſt quickening Help thou canſt expect. As for thy Duty to others, it is not thy Duty when God diſables thee. Perhaps thou wilt ſay, "The Godly are my Af-"flictions; if it were ungodly Men, I could "eaſily bear it." Whoever is the Inſtrument, the Affliction is from God, and the deſerving Cauſe thyſelf; and is it not better to look more to God and thyſelf? Didſt thou not know that the beſt Men are ſtill ſinful in Part? Don't plead, "If I had but that Conſolation, which "you ſay God reſerveth for ſuffering Times, I "ſhould ſuffer more contentedly; but I do not "perceive any ſuch Thing." The more you ſuffer for Righteouſneſs Sake, the more of this Bleſſing you may expect; and the more you ſuffer for your own evil Doing, the longer it will be before that Sweetneſs comes. Are not the Comforts you deſire, neglected or reſiſted? Have your Afflictions wrought kindly with you, and fitted you for Comfort? It is not mere Suffering that prepares you for Comfort, but the Succeſs and Fruit of Sufferings upon your Hearts.

§ 10. (II) *To ſhew the Unreaſonableneſs of reſting in preſent Enjoyments*, conſider, —— *it is ido-*

idolizing them;——it contradicts God's End in giving them;——it is the Way to have them refuſed, withdrawn, or imbittered;——to be ſuffered to take up our Reſt here, is the greateſt Curſe;——it is ſeeking Reſt where it is not to be found;——the Creatures, without God, would aggravate our Miſery; and to confirm all this, we may conſult our own and others Experience.

§ 11. (1) *It is groſs Idolatry to make any Creature, or Means, our Reſt.* To be the Reſt of the Soul, is God's own Prerogative. As it is apparent Idolatry to place our Reſt in Riches, or Honours; ſo it is but a more refined Idolatry to take up our Reſt in excellent Means of Grace. How ill muſt our dear Lord take it, when we give him Cauſe to complain, as he did of our Fellow-Idolaters, *My People have been loſt Sheep, they have forgotten their reſting Place* (d)? And to ſay, "My People can find Reſt "in any Thing, rather than in me. They "can delight in one another, but not in me. "They can rejoice in my Creatures and Or-"dinances, but not in me. Yea, in their very "Labours and Duties they ſeek for Reſt, but "not in me. They had rather be any where, "than be with me. Are theſe their Gods? Have "theſe redeemed them? Will theſe be better "to them, than I have been, or than I would "be?" If yourſelves have a Wife, a Husband, a Son, that had rather be any where than in your Company, and be never ſo merry as when fur-

(d) Jer. l. 6.

furtheſt from you, would you not take it ill? So muſt our God needs do.

§ 12. (2) *You contradict the End of God in giving theſe Enjoyments.* He gave them to help thee to him; and doſt thou take up with them in his ſtead? He gave them to be Refreſhments in thy Journey, and wouldſt thou dwell in thy Inn, and go no further? It may be ſaid of all our Comforts and Ordinances, as it is ſaid of the *Iſraelites, The Ark of the Covenant of the Lord went before them, to ſearch out a reſting Place for them* (e). So do all God's Mercies here. They are not that Reſt; as *John* profeſſed *he was not the Chriſt*; but they are *Voices crying in* this *Wilderneſs*, to bid us *prepare, for the Kingdom of God*, our true Reſt, *is at Hand*. Therefore to reſt here, were to turn all Mercies contrary to their own Ends, and to our own Advantages, and to deſtroy ourſelves with that which ſhould help us.

§ 13. (3) *It is the Way to cauſe God, either to deny the Mercies we ask, or take from us thoſe we enjoy, or at leaſt imbitter them to us.* God is no where ſo jealous as here. If you had a Servant, whom your Wife loved better than yourſelf, would you not take it ill of ſuch a Wife, and rid your Houſe of ſuch a Servant? So, if the Lord ſee you begin to ſettle in the World, and ſay, "Here I will reſt;" no Wonder if he ſoon in his Jealouſy unſettle you. If he love you, no Wonder if he take that from you

(e) Numb. x. 33.

you, with which he ſees you are deſtroying yourſelves. It hath long been my Obſervation of many, that when they have attempted great Works, and have juſt finiſhed them; or have aimed at great Things in the World, and have juſt obtained them; or have lived in much Trouble, and have juſt overcome it; and begin to look on their Condition with Content, and reſt in it; they are then uſually near to Death or Ruin. When a Man is once at this Language, *Soul, take thy Eaſe*; the next News uſually is, *Thou Fool, this Night*, or this Month, or this Year, *thy Soul ſhall be required; and then whoſe ſhall theſe Things be?* What Houſe is there, where this Fool dwelleth not? Let you and I conſider, whether it be not our own Caſe. Many a Servant of God hath been deſtroyed from the Earth, by being over-valued, and over-loved. I am perſuaded, our Diſcontents and Murmurings are not ſo provoking to God, nor ſo deſtructive to the Sinner, as our too ſweet enjoying, and reſting in, a pleaſing State. If God hath croſſed you in Wife, Children, Goods, Friends, either by taking them away, or the Comfort of them; try whether this be not the Cauſe: For whereſoever your Deſires ſtop, and you ſay, "Now I am well;" that Condition you make your God, and engage the Jealouſy of God againſt it. Whether you be Friends to God or Enemies, you can never expect that God ſhould ſuffer you quietly to enjoy your Idols.

§ 14.

§ 14. (4) *Should God ſuffer you to take up your Reſt here, it is one of the greateſt Curſes that could befall you.* It were better never to have a Day of Eaſe in the World; for then Wearineſs might make you ſeek after the true Reſt. But if you are ſuffered to ſit down and reſt here, a reſtleſs Wretch you will be thro' all Eternity. To *have their Portion in this Life*, is the Lot of the moſt miſerable periſhing Sinners. Doth it become *Chriſtians* then to expect ſo much here? Our Reſt is our Heaven; and where we take our Reſt, there we make our Heaven. And wouldſt thou have but ſuch a Heaven as this?

§ 15. (5) *It is ſeeking Reſt where it is not be found.* Your Labour will be loſt, and, if you proceed, your Soul's eternal Reſt too. *Our Reſt is only in the full obtaining of our ultimate End.* But that is not to be expected in this Life; neither is Reſt therefore to be expected here. Is God to be enjoyed in the beſt Church here, as he is in Heaven? How little of God the Saints enjoy under the beſt Means, let their own Complainings teſtify. Poor Comforters are the beſt Ordinances, without God. Should a Traveller take up his Reſt in the Way? No, becauſe his Home is his Journey's End. When you have all that Creatures and Means can afford, have you that which you believed, prayed, ſuffered for? I think you dare not ſay ſo. We are like little Children ſtrayed from Home, and God is now fetching us Home, and we are ready

dy to turn into any Houſe, ſtay and play with every Thing in our Way, and ſit down on every green Bank, and much ado there is to get us Home.——*We are alſo in the midſt of our Labours and Dangers*; and is there any reſting here? What painful Work doth lie upon our Hands? Look to our Brethren, to our Souls, and to God; and what a deal of Work, in reſpect of each of theſe, doth lie before us? And can we reſt in the Midſt of all our Labours? Indeed we may reſt on Earth, as *the Ark* is ſaid to have *reſted in the Midſt of Jordan*; a ſhort and ſmall Reſt. Or as *Abraham* deſired the *Angels to turn in, and reſt themſelves* in his Tent, where they would have been loth to have taken up their Dwelling. Should *Iſrael* have fixed their Reſt in the Wilderneſs, among Serpents, and Enemies, and Wearineſs, and Famine? Should *Noah* have made the *Ark* his Home, and have been loth to come forth when *the Waters were aſſuaged?* Should the Mariner chuſe his Dwelling on the Sea, and ſettle his Reſt in the Midſt of Rocks, and Sands, and raging Tempeſts? Should a Soldier reſt in the thickeſt of his Enemies? And are not *Chriſtians* ſuch Travellers, ſuch Mariners, ſuch Soldiers? Have you not Fears within, and Troubles without? Are we not in continual Dangers? We cannot eat, drink, ſleep, labour, pray, hear, converſe, but in the Midſt of Snares; and ſhall we ſit down and reſt here? O *Chriſtian*, follow thy Work, look to thy Dangers, and hold

hold on to the End, win the Field, and come off the Ground, before thou think of a ſettled Reſt. Whenever thou talkeſt of Reſt on Earth, it is like *Peter on the Mount*, thou *knoweſt not what thou ſayeſt*. If, inſtead of telling the converted *Thief*, *this Day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe*, Chriſt had ſaid, he ſhould reſt there on the Croſs; would he not have took it for a Deriſion? Methinks it ſhould be ill reſting in the Midſt of Sickneſs and Pains, Perſecutions and Diſtreſſes. But if nothing elſe will convince us, yet ſure the Remainders of Sin, which do ſo eaſily beſet us, ſhould quickly ſatisfy a Believer, that here is not his Reſt. I ſay therefore to every one that thinketh of Reſt on Earth, *Ariſe ye, and depart, for this is not your Reſt, becauſe it is polluted* (f). —— *Theſe Things cannot in their Nature be a true Chriſtian's Reſt.* They are too poor to make us rich; too low, to raiſe us to Happineſs; too empty, to fill our Souls; and of too ſhort Continuance to be our eternal Content. If Proſperity, or whatſoever we here deſire, be too baſe to make Gods of, they are too baſe to be our Reſt. —— *The Soul's Reſt muſt be ſufficient to afford it perpetual Satisfaction.* But the Content which Creatures afford waxes old, and abates after a ſhort Enjoyment. If God ſhould rain down *Angel's Food*, we ſhould ſoon *loath the Manna*. If Novelty ſupport not, our Delights on Earth grow dull. All Creatures are to us, as the Flowers to the Bee; there is but

(f) Micah ii. 10.

but little Honey on any one, and therefore there muſt be a ſuperficial Taſte, and ſo to the next. —— *The more the Creature is known, the leſs it ſatisfieth.* Thoſe only are taken with it, who ſee no further than its outward Beauty, without diſcerning its inward Vanity. When we thoroughly know the Condition of other Men, and have diſcovered the Evil as well as the Good, and the Defects as well as the Perfections, we then ceaſe our Admiration.

§ 16. (6) *To have Creatures and Means without God, is an Aggravation of our Miſery.* If God ſhould ſay, "Take my Creatures, my "Word, my Servants, my Ordinances, but "not myſelf;" would you take this for Happineſs? If you had the Word of God, and not *the Word*, which *is God*; or the Bread of the Lord, and not the Lord, which *is the true Bread*; or could cry with the *Jews*, *the Temple of the Lord*, and had not the Lord of the Temple; this were a poor Happineſs. Was *Capernaum* the more happy, or the more miſerable, for *ſeeing the mighty Works which they had ſeen, and hearing the Words of Chriſt which they did hear?* Surely that, which aggravates our Sin and Miſery, cannot be our Reſt.

§ 17. (7) *To confirm all this, let us conſult our own and others Experience.* —— Millions have made Trial; but did any ever find a ſufficient Reſt for his Soul on Earth? Delights I deny not but they have found, but Reſt and Satisfaction they never found. And ſhall we think

think to find that which never Man could find before us? *Ahab's Kingdom* is nothing to him, without *Naboth's Vineyard*; and did that ſatisfy him when he obtained it? Were you, like *Noah's Dove*, to look through the Earth for a reſting Place, you would return, confeſſing, that you can find none. Go, ask *Honour*, is there Reſt here? You may as well reſt on the Top of tempeſtuous Mountains, or in *Ætna*'s Flames. Ask *Riches*, is there Reſt here? Even ſuch as is in a Bed of Thorns. If you enquire for Reſt of *worldly Pleaſure*; it is ſuch as the Fiſh hath in ſwallowing the Bait; when the Pleaſure is ſweeteſt, Death is neareſt. Go to *Learning*, and even to *divine Ordinances*, and enquire whether there your Souls may reſt? You might indeed receive from theſe an Olive-Branch of Hope, as they are Means to your Reſt, and have Relation to Eternity; but in Regard of any Satisfaction in themſelves, you would remain as reſtleſs as ever. How well might all theſe anſwer us, as *Jacob* did *Rachel*, *Am I in God's ſtead*, that you come to me for Soul-Reſt? Not all the States of Men in the World; neither Court nor Country, Towns nor Cities, Shops nor Fields, Treaſuries, Libraries, Solitude, Society, Studies, nor Pulpits, can afford any ſuch Thing as this Reſt. If you could enquire of the *Dead* of all Generations, or of the *Living* through all Dominions, they would all tell you, "Here is no Reſt."——Or if other Men's Experiences move you not, take

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a View of your own. Can you remember the State that did fully ſatisfy you? or if you could, will it prove laſting? I believe we may all ſay of our earthly Reſt, as *Paul* of our Hope, *If it were in this Life only, we are of all Men moſt miſerable.*

§ 18. If then either Scripture, or Reaſon, or the Experience of ourſelves, and all the World, will ſatisfy us, we may ſee there is no reſting here. And yet how guilty are the Generality of us of this Sin? How many Halts and Stops do we make, before we will make the Lord our Reſt? How muſt God even drive us, and fire us out of every Condition, leſt we ſhould ſit down and reſt there? If He give us Proſperity, Riches, or Honour, we do in our Hearts dance before them, as the *Iſraelites* before their *Calf*, and ſay, *Theſe are thy Gods*, and conclude, *it is good to be here.* If He imbitter all theſe to us, how reſtleſs are we till our Condition be ſweetened, that we may ſit down again, and reſt where we were? If he proceed in the Cure, and take the Creature quite away, then how do we labour, and cry, and pray, that God would reſtore it, that we may make it our Reſt again? And while we are deprived of our former Idol, yet rather than come to God, we delight ourſelves in the Hope of recovering it, and make that very Hope our Reſt; or ſearch about from Creature to Creature, to find out ſomething to ſupply the Room; yea, if we can find no Supply, yet we will rather ſet-

tle in this Miſery, and make a Reſt of a wretched Being, than leave all and come to God. O the curſed Averſeneſs of our Souls from God! If any Place in Hell were tolerable, the Soul would rather take up its Reſt there, than come to God. Yea, when he is bringing us over to him, and hath convinced us of the Worth of His Ways and Service, the laſt Deceit of all is here, we will rather ſettle upon thoſe Ways that lead to Him, and thoſe Ordinances that ſpeak of Him, and thoſe Gifts which flow from Him, than we will come entirely over to Himſelf. *Chriſtian*, marvel not that I ſpeak ſo much of reſting in theſe; beware leſt it prove thy own Caſe. I ſuppoſe thou art ſo far convinced of the Vanity of Riches, Honour, and Pleaſure, that thou canſt more eaſily diſclaim theſe; and it is well if it be ſo: but the *Means of Grace* thou lookeſt on with leſs Suſpicion, and thinkeſt thou canſt not delight in them too much, eſpecially ſeeing moſt of the World deſpiſe them, or delight in them too little. I know they muſt be loved and valued, and he that delighteth in any worldly Thing more than in them, is not a *Chriſtian*. But when we are content with Ordinances without God, and had rather be at a Sermon than in Heaven, and a Member of the Church here, than of the perfect Church above, this is a ſad Miſtake. So far let thy Soul take Comfort in Ordinances, as God doth accompany them; remembering, this is not Heaven, but the Firſt-Fruits. *While we are preſent in the Body, we are abſent from the Lord*; and while

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we are abſent from Him, we are abſent from our Reſt. If God were as willing to be abſent from us, as we from Him, and as loth to be our Reſt, as we to reſt in Him, we ſhould be left to an eternal reſtleſs Separation. In a Word, as you are ſenſible of the Sinfulneſs of your earthly Diſcontents, ſo be you alſo of your irregular Satisfactions, and pray God to pardon them much more. And above all the Plagues on this Side Hell, ſee that you *watch and pray againſt ſettling any where ſhort of Heaven, or repoſing your Souls on any Thing below God.*

§ 19. (III) *The next Thing to be conſidered is, our unreaſonable Unwillingneſs to die that we may poſſeſs the Saints Reſt.* We linger, like *Lot* in *Sodom*, till *the Lord, being merciful unto us*, doth pluck us away againſt our Wills. I confeſs that Death of itſelf is not deſirable; but the Soul's Reſt with God is, to which Death is the common Paſſage. Becauſe we are apt to make light of this Sin, let me ſet before you its Nature and Remedy in a Variety of Conſiderations. As for Inſtance.—*It has in it much Infidelity.* If we did but verily believe, that the Promiſe of this Glory is the Word of God, and that God doth truly mean as he ſpeaks, and is fully reſolved to make it good; if we did verily believe, that there is indeed ſuch Bleſſedneſs prepared for Believers; ſurely we ſhould be as impatient of living, as we are now fearful of dying, and ſhould think every Day a Year till our laſt Day ſhould come. Is it poſſible that we can truly

believe, that Death will remove us from Miſery to ſuch Glory, and yet be loth to die? If the Doubts of our own Intereſt in that Glory make us fear, yet a true belief of the Certainty and Excellency of this Reſt would make us reſtleſs till our Title to it be cleared. Though there is much *Faith* and *Chriſtianity* in our Mouths, yet there is much *Infidelity* and *Paganiſm* in our Hearts, which is the chief Cauſe that we are ſo loth to die.——*It is alſo much owing to the Coldneſs of our Love.* If we love our Friend, we love his Company, his Preſence is comfortable, his Abſence is painful; when he comes to us, we entertain him with Gladneſs; when he dies, we mourn, and uſually over-mourn. To be ſeparated from a faithful Friend, is like the rending a Member from our Body. And would not our Deſires after God be ſuch, if we really loved Him? Nay, ſhould it not be much more than ſuch, as he is above all Friends moſt lovely? May the Lord teach us to look cloſely to our Hearts, and take Heed of Self-Deceit in this Point! Whatever we pretend, if we love either *Father*, *Mother*, Husband, *Wife*, *Child*, Friend, Wealth, or *Life* itſelf more than Chriſt, we are yet *none of his* ſincere *Diſciples.* When it comes to the Trial, the Queſtion will not be, who hath preached moſt, or heard moſt, or talked moſt? but, who hath loved moſt? Chriſt will not take Sermons, Prayers, Faſtings, no, nor the *giving our Goods*, nor the *burning our Bodies*, inſtead of Love. And do we love him,

and

and yet care not how long we are from him? Was it ſuch a Joy to *Jacob* to ſee the Face of *Joſeph* in *Egypt?* and ſhall we be contented without the Sight of Chriſt in Glory, and yet ſay we love him? I dare not conclude, that we have no Love at all, when we are ſo loth to die; but I dare ſay, were our Love more, we ſhould die more willingly. If this holy Flame were thoroughly kindled in our Breaſts, we ſhould cry out with *David*, *As the Hart panteth after the Water-Brooks, ſo panteth my Soul after thee, O God. My Soul thirſteth for God, for the living God; when ſhall I come and appear before God?*——*By our Unwillingneſs to die, it appears we are little weary of Sin.* Did we take Sin for the greateſt Evil, we ſhould not be willing to have its Company ſo long. " O fooliſh ſinful " Heart! Haſt thou been ſo long *a Cage of all* " *unclean* Luſts, a Fountain inceſſantly ſtream- " ing forth the bitter Waters of Tranſgreſſion, " and art thou not yet weary? Wretched Soul! " Haſt thou been ſo long wounded in all thy " Faculties, ſo grievouſly languiſhing in all thy " Performances, ſo fruitful a Soil of all Iniqui- " ties, and art thou not yet more weary? " Wouldſt thou ſtill lie under thy Imperfecti- " ons? Hath thy Sin proved ſo profitable a " Commodity, ſo neceſſary a Companion, ſuch " a delightful Employment, that thou doſt ſo " much dread the parting Day? May not God " juſtly grant thee thy Wiſhes, and ſeal thee a " Leaſe of thy deſired Diſtance from Him, and

" *nail thy Ears to theſe Doors* of Miſery, and " exclude thee eternally from His Glory?"— *It ſhews that we are inſenſible of the Vanity of the Creature, when we are ſo loth to hear or think of a Removal.* " Ah fooliſh wretched Soul! " Doth every Priſoner groan for Freedom? " and every Slave deſire his Jubilee? and every " ſick Man long for Health? and every hun- " gry Man for Food? and doſt thou alone " abhor Deliverance? Doth the Sailor wiſh to " ſee the Land? Doth the Husbandman deſire " the Harveſt, and the Labourer to receive his " Pay? Doth the Traveller long to be at Home, " and the Racer to win the Prize, and the Sol- " dier to win the Field? And art thou loth to " ſee thy Labours finiſhed, and to receive the " End of thy Faith and Sufferings? Have thy " Griefs been only Dreams? If they were, yet " methinks thou ſhouldſt not be afraid of " waking. Or is it not rather the World's " Delights that are all mere Dreams and Sha- " dows? Or is the World become of late " more kind? We may, at our Peril, reconcile " ourſelves to the World, but it will never re- " concile itſelf to us. O unworthy Soul! who " hadſt rather dwell in this Land of Darkneſs, " and wander in this barren Wilderneſs, than " be at Reſt with Jeſus Chriſt! who hadſt ra- " ther ſtay among the Wolves, and daily ſuffer " the Scorpion's Stings, than praiſe the Lord " with the Hoſt of Heaven!"

§ 20.

§ 20. THIS Unwillingneſs to die, *doth actually impeach us of High Treaſon againſt the Lord.* Is it not chuſing of Earth before Him, and taking preſent Things for our Happineſs, and conſequently making them our very God? If we did indeed make God our End, our Reſt, our Portion, our Treaſure, how is it poſſible but we ſhould deſire to enjoy him?——*It moreover diſcovers ſome Diſſimulation.* Would you have any Man believe you, when you call the Lord your only Hope, and ſpeak of Chriſt as All in All, and of the Joy that is in his Preſence, and yet would endure the hardeſt Life, rather than die, and enter into his Preſence? What Self-Contradiction is this, to talk ſo hardly of the World, and the Fleſh, to groan and complain of Sin and Suffering; and yet fear no Day more than that, which we expect ſhould bring our final Freedom? What Hypocriſy is this, to profeſs to ſtrive and fight for Heaven, which we are loth to come to; and ſpend one Hour after another in Prayer, for that which we would not have?——*Hereby we wrong the Lord and his Promiſes, and diſgrace his Ways in the Eyes of the World.* As if we would perſuade them to queſtion, whether God be true to his Word or no? Whether there be any ſuch Glory as the Scripture mentions? When they ſee thoſe ſo loth to leave their Hold of preſent Things, who have profeſſed to live by Faith, and have boaſted of their Hopes in another World, and ſpoken diſgracefully of all Things

below in Compariſon of Things above; how doth this confirm the World in their Unbelief and Senſuality? "Sure," ſay they, "if theſe "Profeſſors did expect ſo much Glory, and "make ſo light of the World as they ſeem, "they would not themſelves be ſo loth to "change." O how are we ever able to repair the wrong which we do to God and Souls by this Scandal? And what an Honour to God, what a Strengthening to Believers, what a Conviction to Unbelievers, would it be, if Chriſtians in this did anſwer their Profeſſions, and chearfully welcome the News of Reſt?——*It alſo evidently ſhews, that we have ſpent much Time to little Purpoſe.* Have we not had all our Life-Time to prepare to die? So many Years to make ready for one Hour, and are we ſo unready and unwilling yet? What have we done? Why have we lived? Had we any greater Matters to mind? Would we have wiſhed for more frequent Warnings? How oft hath Death entered the Habitations of our Neighbours? How oft hath it knocked at our own Doors? How many Diſtempers have vexed our Bodies, that we have been forced to receive *the Sentence of Death?* And are we unready and unwilling after all this? O careleſs, dead-hearted Sinners! unworthy Neglecters of God's Warnings! faithleſs Betrayers of our own Souls!

§ 21. *Conſider, Not to die, is, Never to be happy.* To eſcape Death, is, to miſs of Bleſſedneſs; except God ſhould tranſlate us, as

Enoch

Enoch and *Elijah*; which he never did before, or ſince. *If in this Life only we have Hope in Chriſt, we are of all Men moſt miſerable.* If you would not die, and go to Heaven, what would you have more than an *Epicure*, or a Beaſt? Why do we pray, and faſt, and mourn? Why do we ſuffer the Contempt of the World? Why are we *Chriſtians*, and not *Pagans* and *Infidels*, if we do not deſire a Life to come? Wouldſt thou loſe thy Faith and Labour, *Chriſtian*, all thy Duties and Sufferings, all the End of thy Life, and all the Blood of Chriſt, and be contented with the Portion of a Worldling or a Brute? Rather ſay as one did on his Death-Bed, when he was asked whether he was willing to die or no, "Let him be loth to die, "who is loth to be with Chriſt."——*Is God willing by Death to glorify us, and are we unwilling to die, that we may be glorified?* Methinks, if a Prince were willing to make you his Heir, you would ſcarce be unwilling to accept it; the refuſing ſuch a Kindneſs would diſcover Ingratitude and Unworthineſs. As God hath reſolved againſt them, who make Excuſes when they ſhould come to Chriſt, *none of thoſe Men, which were bidden, ſhall taſte of my Supper*; ſo it is juſt with him to reſolve againſt us, who frame Excuſes when we ſhould come to Glory.——*The Lord Jeſus was willing to come from Heaven to Earth for us, and ſhall we be unwilling to remove from Earth to Heaven for ourſelves and Him?* He might have ſaid, "What

"is

" is it to me, if theſe Sinners ſuffer? If they va-
" lue their Fleſh above their Spirits, and their
" Luſt above my Father's Love, if they will
" ſell their Souls for nought, who is it fit ſhould
" be the Loſer? Should I, whom they have
" wronged? Muſt they wilfully tranſgreſs my
" Law, and I undergo their deſerved Pain?
" Muſt I come down from Heaven to Earth,
" and cloath myſelf with human Fleſh, be ſpit
" upon and ſcorned by Man, and faſt, and
" weep, and ſuffer, and bleed, and die a cur-
" ſed Death; and all this for wretched Worms,
" who had rather hazard their Souls, than for-
" bear one forbidden Morſel? Do they caſt
" away themſelves ſo ſlightly, and muſt I re-
" deem them ſo dearly?" Thus we ſee Chriſt had Reaſon enough to have made him unwilling; and yet did he voluntarily condeſcend. But we have no Reaſon againſt our coming to him; except we will reaſon againſt our Hopes, and plead for the Perpetuity of our own Calamities. Chriſt came down to fetch us up; and would we have him loſe his Blood, and Labour, and go again without us? Hath he bought our Reſt at ſo dear a Rate? Is our Inheritance *purchaſed with his Blood?* And are we after all this, loth to enter? Ah, Sirs! it was Chriſt, and not we, that had Cauſe to be loth. May the Lord forgive, and heal, this fooliſh Ingratitude!

§ 22. *Do we not combine with our moſt cruel Foes in their moſt malicious Deſigns, while we are loth to die, and go to Heaven?* What is the Devil's

vil's daily Buſineſs? Is it not to keep our Souls from God? And ſhall we be content with this? Is it not the one Half of Hell, which we wiſh to ourſelves, while we deſire to be abſent from Heaven? What Sport is this to Satan, that his Deſires and thine, *Chriſtian*, ſhould ſo concur? That when he ſees he cannot get thee to Hell, he can ſo long keep thee out of Heaven, and make thee the earneſt Petitioner for it thyſelf? O gratify not the Devil ſo much to thy own Injury!——*Do not our daily Fears of Death make our Lives a continual Torment?* Thoſe Lives which might be full of Joy, in the daily Contemplations of the Life to come, and the ſweet delightful Thoughts of Bliſs; how do we fill them up with cauſeleſs Terror? Thus we conſume our own Comforts, and prey upon our trueſt Pleaſures. When we might lie down, and riſe up, and walk abroad, with our Hearts full of the Joys of God, we continually fill them with perplexing Fears. For he that fears dying, muſt be always fearing; becauſe he hath always Reaſon to expect it. And how can that Man's Life be comfortable, who lives in continual Fear of loſing his Comforts?——*Are not theſe Fears of Death ſelf-created Sufferings?* As if God had not inflicted enough upon us, but we muſt inflict more upon ourſelves. Is not Death bitter enough to the Fleſh of itſelf, but we muſt double and treble its Bitterneſs? The Sufferings laid upon us by God, do all lead to happy Iſſues; the Progreſs is, from *Tribulation*

to

to *Patience*, from thence to *Experience*, and ſo to *Hope*, and at laſt to *Glory*. But the Sufferings we make for ourſelves, are circular and endleſs, from Sin to Suffering, from Suffering to Sin, and ſo to Suffering again: And not only ſo, but they multiply in their Courſe; every Sin is greater than the former, and ſo every Suffering alſo: So that except we think God hath made us to be our own Tormenters, we have ſmall Reaſon to nouriſh our Fears of Death.——*And are they not uſeleſs, unprofitable Fears?* As all our Care *cannot make one Hair white or black*, nor *add one Cubit to our Stature*; ſo neither can our Fear prevent our Sufferings, nor delay our Death one Hour; willing or unwilling, we muſt away. Many a Man's Fears have haſtened his End, but no Man's did ever avert it. 'Tis true a cautious Fear, concerning the Danger after Death, hath profited many, and is very uſeful to the preventing of that Danger; but for a Member of Chriſt, and an Heir of Heaven, to be afraid of entering his own Inheritance, is a ſinful uſeleſs Fear.——*And do not our Fears of dying inſnare our Souls, and add Strength to many Temptations?* What made *Peter* deny his Lord? What makes Apoſtates in ſuffering Times forſake the Truth? Why doth the green Blade of unrooted Faith wither before the Heat of Perſecution? Fear of Impriſonment and Poverty may do much, but Fear of Death will do much more. So much Fear as we have of Death, ſo much Cowardice

ardice we uſually have in the Cauſe of God: Beſide the Multitude of unbelieving Contrivances, and Diſcontents at the wiſe Diſpoſals of God, and hard Thoughts of moſt of his Providences, which this Sin doth make us guilty of.

§ 23. *Let us further conſider, what a competent Time moſt of us have had.* Why ſhould not a Man, that would die at all, be as willing at Thirty or Forty, if God ſee fit, as at Seventy or Eighty? Length of Time doth not conquer Corruption; it never withers, nor decays thro' Age. Except we receive an Addition of Grace, as well as Time, we naturally grow worſe. "O my Soul, depart in Peace. As thou "wouldſt not deſire an unlimited State in "Wealth and Honour, ſo deſire it not in Point "of Time. If thou waſt ſenſible, how little "thou deſerveſt an Hour of that Patience "which thou haſt enjoyed, thou wouldſt think "thou haſt had a large Part. Is it not divine "Wiſdom that ſets the Bounds? God will "honour himſelf by various Perſons, and ſe-"veral Ages, and not by one Perſon or Age. "Seeing thou haſt acted thy own Part, and "finiſhed thy appointed Courſe, come down "contentedly, that others may ſucceed, who "muſt have their Turns as well as thyſelf. "Much Time hath much Duty. Beg there-"fore for Grace to improve it better; but be "content with thy Share of Time."—"*Thou "haſt alſo had a Competency of the Comforts of "Life.*

" *Life.* God might have made thy Life a
" Burthen, till thou hadſt been as weary of
" poſſeſſing it, as thou art now afraid of lo-
" ſing it. He might have ſuffered thee to
" have conſumed thy Days in Ignorance, with-
" out the ſaving Knowledge of Chriſt: But
" He hath opened thy Eyes in the Morning
" of thy Days, and acquainted thee betimes
" with the Buſineſs of thy Life. Hath thy
" heavenly Father cauſed thy Lot to fall in
" *Europe*, not in *Aſia*, *Africa*, or *America*;
" in *England*, not in *Spain* or *Italy*? Hath he
" filled up all thy Life with Mercies, and doſt
" thou now think thy Share too ſmall? What
" a Multitude of Hours of Conſolation, of de-
" lightful Sabbaths, of pleaſant Studies, of
" precious Companions, of wonderful Deli-
" verances, of excellent Opportunities, of fruit-
" ful Labours, of joyful Tidings, of ſweet Ex-
" periences, of aſtoniſhing Providences, hath
" that Life partaken of? Hath thy Life been
" ſo ſweet, that thou art loth to leave it? Is
" this thy Thanks to Him, who is thus draw-
" ing thee to his own Sweetneſs? O fooliſh
" Soul! would thou waſt as covetous after
" Eternity, as thou art for a fading, periſhing
" Life! and after the Preſence of God in Glo-
" ry, as thou art for Continuance on Earth?
" Then thou wouldſt cry, *why is his Chariot*
" *ſo long in coming? Why tarry the Wheels of*
" *his Chariots?* How long, Lord! how long!"
" ——" *What if God ſhould let thee live many*
" *Years,*

" *Years, but deny thee the Mercies which thou*
" *haſt hitherto enjoyed?* Might He not give
" thee Life, as he gave the murmuring *Iſ-*
" *raelites* Quails? He might give thee Life, till
" thou art weary of living, and as glad to be
" rid of it as *Judas*, or *Achitophel*; and make
" thee like many miſerable Creatures in the
" World, who can hardly forbear laying vio-
" lent Hands on themſelves. Be not there-
" fore ſo importunate for Life, which may
" prove a Judgment, inſtead of a Bleſſing."
" ——*How many of the precious Servants of*
" *God of all Ages and Places, have gone before*
" *thee?* Thou art not to enter an untrodden
" Path, nor appointed firſt to break the Ice.
" Except *Enoch* and *Elijah*, which of the
" Saints have eſcaped Death? And art thou
" better than they? There are many Millions
" of Saints dead, more than now remain on
" Earth. What a Number of thine own Bo-
" ſom-Friends, and Companions in Duty, are
" now gone, and why ſhouldſt thou be ſo loth
" to follow? Nay, hath not Jeſus Chriſt him-
" ſelf gone this Way? Hath he not ſanctified
" the Grave to us, and perfumed the Duſt
" with his own Body, and art thou loth to fol-
" low him too? Rather ſay as *Thomas*, *Let us*
" *alſo go, that we may die with him.*"

§ 24. If what hath been ſaid will not perſuade, Scripture and Reaſon have little Force. And I have ſaid the more on this Subject, finding it ſo needful to myſelf and others; finding among

among ſo many Chriſtians, who could do and ſuffer much for Chriſt, ſo few that can willingly die; and of many, who have ſomewhat ſubdued other Corruptions, ſo few have got the Conqueſt of this. I perſuade not the Ungodly from fearing Death: 'Tis a Wonder rather, that they fear it no more, and ſpend not their Days in continual Horror.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

The Importance of leading a heavenly Life upon Earth.

§ 1. *The Reaſonableneſs of delighting in the Thoughts of the Saints Reſt.* § 2. *Chriſtians exhorted to it, by conſidering,* § 3. (1) *it will evidence their ſincere Piety;* § 4. (2) *it is the higheſt Excellence of the Chriſtian Temper;* § 5. (3) *it leads to the moſt comfortable Life;* § 6—9. (4) *it will be the beſt Preſervative from Temptations to Sin;* § 10. (5) *it will invigorate their Graces and Duties;* § 11. (6) *it will be their beſt Cordial in all Afflictions;* § 12. (7) *it will render them moſt profitable to others;* § 13. (8) *it will honour God;* § 14. (9) *without it, we diſobey the Commands, and loſe the moſt gracious and delightful Diſcoveries of the Word of God;* § 15. (10) *it is the more reaſonable to have our Hearts with God, as His is ſo much on us;* § 16, 17. *and* (11) *in Heaven, where we have ſo much Intereſt and Relation;* § 18. (12) *beſides, there is nothing, but Heaven, worth ſetting our Hearts upon.* § 19. *Tranſition to the Subject of the next Chapter.*

§ 1. IS there ſuch a Reſt remaining for us? Why then are our Thoughts no more upon it? Why are not our Hearts continually there? Why dwell we not there in conſtant Contemplation? What is the Cauſe of this Neglect? Are we reaſonable in this, or are we not? Hath the eternal God provided us ſuch a Glory, and promiſed to take us up to dwell with himſelf, and is not this worth thinking of? Should not the ſtrongeſt Deſires of our Hearts be after it? Do we believe this, and yet forget and neglect it? If God will not give us Leave to approach this Light, what mean all his earneſt Invitations? Why doth He ſo condemn our Earthly-mindedneſs, and command us to ſet our Affections on Things above? Ah vile Hearts! If God were againſt it, we were likelier to be for it; but when He commands our Hearts to Heaven, then they will not ſtir one Inch: Like our Predeceſſors, the ſinful *Iſraelites*; when God would have them march for *Canaan*, then they mutiny, and will not ſtir; but when God bids them not go, then they will be preſently marching. If God ſay, *love not the World, nor the Things of the World*; we dote upon it. How freely, how frequently can we think of our Pleaſures, our Friends, our Labours, our Fleſh and its Luſts, yea, our Wrongs and Miſeries, our Fears and Sufferings? But where is the Chriſtian, whoſe Heart is on his Reſt? What is the Matter? Are we

ſo

ſo full of Joy, that we need no more? Or is there nothing in Heaven for our joyous Thoughts? Or rather, are not our Hearts carnal and ſtupid? Let us humble theſe ſenſual Hearts, that have in them no more of Chriſt and Glory. If this World was the only Subject of our Diſcourſe, all would count us ungodly; why then may we not call our Hearts ungodly, that have ſo little Delight in Chriſt and Heaven?

§ 2. But I am ſpeaking only to thoſe, whoſe Portion is in Heaven, whoſe Hopes are there, and who have forſaken all to enjoy this Glory; and ſhall I be diſcouraged from perſuading ſuch to be Heavenly-minded? *Fellow-Chriſtians*, if you will not hear and obey, who will? Well may we be diſcouraged to exhort the blind ungodly World, and may ſay, as *Moſes* did, *Behold the Children of Iſrael have not hearkened unto me, how then ſhall Pharoah hear me?* I require thee, *Reader*, as ever thou hopeſt for a Part in this Glory, that thou preſently take thy Heart to task, chide it for its wilful Strangeneſs to God, turn thy Thoughts from the Purſuit of Vanity, bend thy Soul to ſtudy Eternity, buſy it about the Life to come, habituate thyſelf to ſuch Contemplations, and let not thoſe Thoughts be ſeldom and curſory, but bathe thy Soul in Heaven's Delights; and if thy backward Soul begin to flag, and thy Thoughts to ſcatter, call them back, hold them to their Work, bear not with their Lazineſs, nor connive at one Neg-

lect. And when thou haſt, in Obedience to God, tried this Work, got acquainted with it, and kept a Guard on thy Thoughts till they are accuſtomed to obey, thou wilt then find thyſelf in the Suburbs of Heaven, and that there is indeed a Sweetneſs in the Work and Way of God, and that the Life of Chriſtianity is a Life of Joy. Thou wilt meet with thoſe abundant Conſolations which thou haſt prayed, panted, and groaned after, and which ſo few Chriſtians do ever here obtain, becauſe they know not this Way to them, or elſe make not Conſcience of walking in it. Say not "We are unable to "ſet our own Hearts on Heaven; this muſt be "the Work of God only." Tho' God be the chief Diſpoſer of your Hearts, yet next under him you have the greateſt Command of them yourſelves. Though without Chriſt you can do nothing, yet under him you may do much, and muſt, or elſe it will be undone, and yourſelves undone thro' your Neglect. *Chriſtians*, if your Souls were healthful and vigorous, they would perceive incomparably more Delight and Sweetneſs in the believing joyful Thoughts of your future Bleſſedneſs, than the ſoundeſt Stomach finds in its Food, or the ſtrongeſt Senſes in the Enjoyment of their Objects; ſo little painful would this Work be to you. But becauſe I know, while we have Fleſh about us, and any Remains of that *carnal Mind, which is Enmity to God* and to this noble Work, that all Motives are little enough, I will here lay down *ſome*

Con-

Conſiderations, which if you will deliberately weigh with an impartial Judgment, I doubt not but they will prove effectual with your Hearts, and make you reſolve on this excellent Duty. More particularly conſider —— it will *evidence your ſincere Piety*; —— it is *the higheſt Excellence of the Chriſtian Temper*; —— it is *the Way to live moſt comfortably*; —— it will be the beſt *Preſervative from Temptations to Sin*; —— it will *enliven your Graces and Duties*; —— it will be your *beſt Cordial in all Afflictions*; —— it will *render you moſt profitable to others*; —— it will *honour God*; —— *without it you will diſobey the Commands, and loſe the moſt gracious and delightful Diſcoveries of the Word of God*; —— it is alſo the more *reaſonable to have your Hearts with God, as His is ſo much on you*; —— and *in Heaven, where you have ſo much Intereſt and Relation*; —— beſides, *there is nothing, but Heaven, worth ſetting your Hearts upon.*

§ 3. (1) *Conſider, a Heart ſet upon Heaven will be one of the moſt unqueſtionable Evidences of your Sincerity, and a clear Diſcovery of a true Work of ſaving Grace upon your Souls.* You are often asking, "How ſhall we know that we "are truly ſanctified?" Here you have a Sign infallible from the Mouth of Jeſus Chriſt himſelf; *where your Treaſure is, there will your Hearts be alſo* (a). God is the Saints Treaſure and Happineſs; Heaven is the Place where they muſt fully enjoy him. A Heart therefore ſet

(a) Mat. vi. 21.

upon Heaven, is no more but a Heart ſet upon God; and ſurely a Heart ſet upon God through Chriſt is the trueſt Evidence of ſaving Grace. When Learning will be no Proof of Grace; when Knowledge, Duties, Gifts will fail; when Arguments from thy Tongue, or Hand, may be confuted; yet then will this from the Bent of thy Heart prove thee ſincere. Take a poor Chriſtian of a weak Underſtanding, a feeble Memory, a ſtammering Tongue; yet his Heart is ſet on God, he hath choſen Him for his Portion, his Thoughts are on Eternity, his Deſires there, he cries out, "O that I were "there!" he takes that Day for a Time of Impriſonment, in which he hath not had one refreſhing View of Eternity; I had rather die in this Man's Condition, than in the Caſe of him who hath the moſt eminent Gifts, and is moſt admired for his Performances, while his Heart is not thus taken up with God. The Man that Chriſt will find out at the laſt Day, and condemn for Want of a *Wedding-Garment*, will be one that wants this Frame of Heart. The Queſtion will not then be, how much have you *known*, or *profeſſed*, or *talked?* but, how much have you *loved*, and where was your Heart? *Chriſtians*, as you would have a Proof of your Title to Glory, labour to get your Hearts above. If Sin and Satan keep not your Affections from thence, they will never be able to keep away your Perſons.

§ 4. (2) *A Heart in Heaven is the higheſt Excellence of your Chriſtian Temper.* As there is

is a common Excellence, by which Chriſtians differ from the World; ſo there is this peculiar Dignity of Spirit, by which the more excellent differ from the reſt. As the nobleſt of Creatures, ſo the nobleſt of Chriſtians are they whoſe Faces are ſet moſt direct for Heaven. Such an heavenly Saint, who hath been wrapt up to God in his Contemplations, and is newly come down from the Views of Chriſt, what Diſcoveries will he make of thoſe ſuperior Regions! how high and ſacred is his Diſcourſe! Enough to convince an underſtanding Hearer, that he hath ſeen the Lord, and that no Man could ſpeak ſuch Words, except he had been with God. This, this is the noble Chriſtian. The moſt famous Mountains and Trees are thoſe that reach neareſt to Heaven; and he is the choiceſt Chriſtian, whoſe Heart is moſt frequently and moſt delightfully there. If a Man have lived near the King, or hath ſeen the *Sultan* of *Perſia*, or the *Great Turk*, he will be thought a Step higher than his Neighbours. What then ſhall we judge of him that daily travels as far as Heaven, and there hath ſeen *the King of Kings*, hath frequent Admittance into the divine Preſence, and feaſteth his Soul upon the Tree of Life? For my Part, I value this Man before the nobleſt, the richeſt, the moſt learned in the World.

§ 5. (3) *A heavenly Mind is the neareſt and trueſt Way to a Life of Comfort.* The Countries far North, are cold and frozen, becauſe

they are diſtant from the Sun. What makes ſuch frozen uncomfortable Chriſtians, but their living ſo far from Heaven? And what makes others ſo warm in Comforts, but their living higher, and having nearer Acceſs to God? When the Sun in the Spring draws near our Part of the Earth, how do all Things congratulate its Approach? The Earth looks green, the Trees ſhoot forth, the Plants revive, the Birds ſing, and all Things ſmile upon us. If we ſhould but try this Life with God, and keep theſe Hearts above, what a Spring of Joy would be within us? How ſhould we forget our Winter-Sorrows? How early ſhould we riſe to ſing the Praiſe of our Great Creator? O *Chriſtians*, get above. Thoſe that have been there, have found it warmer; and I doubt not but thou haſt ſometimes tried it thyſelf. When have you largeſt Comforts? Is it not, when thou haſt converſed with God, and talked with the Inhabitants of the higher World, and viewed their Manſions, and filled thy Soul with the Fore-Thoughts of Glory? If thou knoweſt by Experience what this Practice is, I dare ſay thou knoweſt what ſpiritual Joy is. If, as *David* profeſſes, *the Light of God's Countenance more gladdens the Heart than Corn, and Wine*; then ſurely they that draw neareſt, and moſt behold it, muſt be fulleſt of theſe Joys. Whom ſhould we blame then, that we are ſo void of Conſolation, but our own negligent Hearts? God hath provided us a Crown of Glory, and promiſed to

ſet

ſet it ſhortly on our Heads, and we will not ſo much as think of it? He bids us behold and rejoice, and we will not ſo much as look at it; and yet we complain for want of Comfort. It is by *believing* that we are *filled with Joy and Peace*, and no longer than we continue our believing. It is *in Hope* the Saints *rejoice*, and no longer than they continue hoping. God's Spirit worketh our Comforts, by ſetting our own Spirits on work upon the Promiſes, and raiſing our Thoughts to the Place of our Comforts. As you would delight a covetous Man by ſhewing him Gold; ſo God delights his People by leading them, as it were, into Heaven, and ſhewing them Himſelf, and their Reſt with Him. He does not caſt in our Joys while we are idle, or taken up with other Things. He gives the Fruits of the Earth while we plow, and ſow, and weed, and water, and dung, and dreſs, and with Patience expect his Bleſſing; ſo doth He give the Joys of the Soul. I intreat thee, *Reader*, in the Name of the Lord, and as thou valueſt the Life of conſtant Joy, and that good Conſcience, which is a continual Feaſt, to ſet upon this Work ſeriouſly, and learn the Art of Heavenly-mindedneſs, and thou ſhalt find the Increaſe an Hundred-fold, and the Benefit abundantly exceed thy Labour. But this is the Miſery of Man's Nature; though every Man naturally hates Sorrow, and loves the moſt merry and joyful Life, yet few love the Way to Joy, or will endure the Pains by which

which it is obtained; they will take the next that comes to Hand, and content themſelves with earthly Pleaſures, rather than they will aſcend to Heaven to ſeek it; and yet when all is done, they muſt have it there, or be without it.

§ 6. (4) *A Heart in Heaven will be a moſt excellent Preſervative againſt Temptations to Sin.* ——*It will keep the Heart well employed.* When we are idle, we tempt the Devil to tempt us; as careleſs Perſons make Thieves. A Heart in Heaven can reply to the Tempter, as *Nehemiah* did, *I am doing a great Work, ſo that I cannot come.* It hath no Leiſure to be luſtful or wanton, ambitious or worldly. If you were but buſy in your lawful Callings, you would not be ſo ready to hearken to Temptations; much leſs if you were alſo buſy above with God. Would a Judge be perſuaded to riſe from the Bench, when he is ſitting upon Life and Death, to go and play with Children in the Streets? No more will a Chriſtian, when he is taking a Survey of his Eternal Reſt, give Ear to the alluring Charms of Satan. The Children of the Kingdom ſhould never have Time for Trifles, eſpecially when they are employed in the Affairs of the Kingdom; and this Employment is one of the Saints chief Preſervatives from Temptations.

§ 7.——*A heavenly Mind is the freeſt from Sin, becauſe it hath truer and livelier Apprehenſions of ſpiritual Things.* He hath ſo deep an Inſight into the Evil of Sin, the Vanity of the Crea-

Creature, the Brutiſhneſs of fleſhly ſenſual Delights, that Temptations have little Power over him. *In vain the Net is ſpread*, ſays *Solomon*, *in the Sight of any Bird.* And uſually in vain doth Satan lay his Snares to entrap the Soul that plainly ſees them. Earth is the Place for his Temptations, and Earth the ordinary Bait; and how ſhall theſe enſnare the Chriſtian, who hath left the Earth, and walks with God? Is Converſe with wiſe and learned Men, the Way to make one wiſe? much more is converſe with God. If Travellers return home with Wiſdom and Experience, how much more he that travels to Heaven? If our Bodies are ſuited to the Air and Climate we moſt live in; his Underſtanding muſt be fuller of Light. who lives with the Father of Lights. The Men of the World, that dwell below, and know no other Converſation but earthly, no Wonder if their *Underſtanding be darkened*, and Satan *takes them captive at his Will.* How can Worms and Moles ſee, whoſe Dwelling is always in the Earth? While this Duſt is in their Eyes, no Wonder they miſtake Gain for Godlineſs, Sin for Grace, the World for God, their own Wills for the Law of Chriſt, and in the Iſſue Hell for Heaven. But when a Chriſtian withdraws himſelf from his worldly Thoughts, and begins to converſe with God in Heaven, methinks he is, as *Nebuchadnezzar*, taken from the Beaſts of the Field to the Throne, and *his Reaſon returneth unto him.* When he hath had a Glimpſe of Eter-

Eternity, and looks down on the World again, how doth he charge with Folly his Neglects of Chriſt, his fleſhly Pleaſures, his earthly Cares? How doth he ſay of his *Laughter*, *it is mad*; and of his vain *Mirth*, *what doth it?* How doth he verily think there is no Man in *Bedlam* ſo truly mad, as wilful Sinners, and unworthy Slighters of Chriſt and Glory? This makes a dying Man uſually wiſer than others, becauſe he looks on Eternity as near, and hath more Heart-piercing Thoughts of it, than he ever had in Health and Proſperity. Then many of the moſt bitter Enemies of the Saints have their Eyes opened, and, like *Balaam*, cry out, *O that I might die the Death of the Righteous, and that my laſt End might be like his!* Yet let the ſame Men recover, and loſe their Apprehenſions of the Life to come, and how quickly do they loſe their Underſtandings with it? Tell a dying Sinner of the Riches, Honours, or Pleaſures of the World, and would he not anſwer, "What's all this to me, who muſt preſently "appear before God, and give Account of all "my Life?" *Chriſtian*, if the apprehended Nearneſs of Eternity will work ſuch ſtrange Effects upon the Ungodly, and make them ſo much wiſer than before; O what rare Effects would it produce in thee, if thou couldſt always dwell in the Views of God, and in lively Thoughts of thy everlaſting State! Surely a Believer, if he improve his Faith, may ordinarily have more quickening Apprehenſions of the Life

Life to come, in the Time of his Health, than an Unbeliever hath at the Hour of his Death.

§ 8. ——*A heavenly Mind is alſo fortified againſt Temptations, becauſe the Affections are thoroughly prepoſſeſſed with the high Delights of another World.* He that loves moſt, and not he that only knows moſt, will moſt eaſily reſiſt the Motions of Sin. The Will doth as ſweetly reliſh Goodneſs, as the Underſtanding doth Truth; and here lies much of a Chriſtian's Strength. When thou haſt had a freſh delightful Taſte of Heaven, thou wilt not be ſo eaſily perſuaded from it. You cannot perſuade a Child to part with his Sweet-meats, while he hath the Taſte in his Mouth. O that you would be much in feeding on *the hidden Manna*, and be frequently taſting the Delights of Heaven! How would this confirm thy Reſolutions, and make thee deſpiſe the Fooleries of the World, and ſcorn to be cheated with ſuch childiſh Toys? If the Devil had ſet upon *Peter* in the Mount of Transfiguration, when he ſaw *Moſes* and *Elias* talking with Chriſt, would he ſo eaſily have been drawn to deny his Lord? What, with all that Glory in his Eye? No. So if he ſhould ſet upon a believing Soul, when he is taken up in the Mount with Chriſt, what would ſuch a Soul ſay? "Get thee behind me, Satan; wouldſt "thou perſuade me hence with trifling Plea- "ſures, and ſteal my Heart from this my Reſt? "Wouldſt thou have me ſell theſe Joys for no- "thing? Is there any Honour or Delight like "this?

" this? or can that be Profit, for which I " muſt loſe this?" But Satan ſtays till we are come down, and the Taſte of Heaven is out of our Mouths, and the Glory we ſaw is even forgotten, and then he eaſily deceives our Hearts. Though the *Iſraelites* below, eat, and drink, and riſe up to play before their Idol, *Moſes* in the Mount will not do ſo. O if we could keep the Taſte of our Souls continually delighted with the Sweetneſs above, with what Diſdain ſhould we ſpit out the Baits of Sin?

§ 9. —— *Beſides, whilſt the Heart is ſet on Heaven, a Man is under God's Protection.* If Satan then aſſault us, God is more engaged for our Defence, and will doubtleſs ſtand by us, and ſay, *My Grace is ſufficient for thee.* When a Man is in the Way of God's Bleſſing, he is in the leſs Danger of Sin's enticing. Amidſt thy Temptations, *Chriſtian Reader*, uſe much this powerful Remedy; keep cloſe with God by a *heavenly Mind*; follow your Buſineſs above with Chriſt, and you will find this a ſurer Help than any other. *The Way of Life is above to the Wiſe, that he may depart from Hell beneath* (b). Remember that *Noah was a juſt Man, and perfect in his Generation*; for he *walked with God*: And that God ſaid to *Abraham, walk before me, and be thou perfect.*

§ 10. (5) *The diligent keeping your Hearts in Heaven, will maintain the Vigour of all your Graces, and put Life into all your Duties.* The hea-

(b) Prov. xv. 24.

heavenly Chriſtian is the lively Chriſtian. 'Tis our Strangeneſs to Heaven that makes us ſo dull. How will the Soldier hazard his Life, and the Mariner paſs through Storms and Waves, and no Difficulty keep them back, when they think of an uncertain periſhing Treaſure? What Life then would it put into a Chriſtian's Endeavours, if he would frequently think of his everlaſting Treaſure? We run ſo ſlowly, and ſtrive ſo lazily, becauſe we ſo little mind the Prize. Obſerve but the Man who is much in Heaven, and you ſhall ſee he is not like other Chriſtians; there is ſomething of what he hath ſeen above, appeareth in all his Duty and Converſation. If a Preacher, how heavenly are his Sermons? If a private Chriſtian, what heavenly Converſe, Prayers, and Deportment! Set upon this Employment, and others will ſee *the Face* of your Converſation *ſhine*, and ſay, ſurely he hath been *with God in the Mount*. But if you lie complaining of Deadneſs and Dulneſs, that you cannot love Chriſt, nor rejoice in his Love, that you have no Life in Prayer, nor any other Duty; and yet neglect this quickening Employment; you are the Cauſe of your own Complaints. Is not thy Life *hid with Chriſt in God?* Where muſt thou go, but to Chriſt for it? And where is that, but to Heaven, *where Chriſt is? Thou wilt not come to Chriſt, that thou mayſt have Life.* If thou wouldſt have Light and Heat, why art thou no more in the Sun-ſhine? For Want of this

this Recourſe to Heaven, thy Soul is a Lamp that is not lighted, and thy Duties as a Sacrifice which hath no Fire. Fetch one Coal daily from this Altar, and ſee if thy Offering will not burn. Light thy Lamp at this Flame, and feed it daily with Oil from hence, and ſee if it will not gloriouſly ſhine. Keep cloſe to this reviving Fire, and ſee if thy Affections will not be warm. In thy Want of Love to God, lift up thy Eye of Faith to Heaven, behold his Beauty, contemplate his Excellencies, and ſee whether his Amiableneſs and perfect Goodneſs will not raviſh thy Heart. As Exerciſe maintaineth Appetite, Strength and Vigour to the Body; ſo theſe heavenly Exerciſes will quickly cauſe the Increaſe of Grace and ſpiritual Life. Beſides it is not falſe or ſtrange Fire, which you fetch from Heaven for your Sacrifices. The Zeal which is kindled by your Meditations on Heaven, is moſt likely to be a heavenly Zeal. Some Men's Fervency is only drawn from their Books, and ſome from the Sharpneſs of Affliction, and ſome from the Mouth of a moving Miniſter, and ſome from the Attention of an Auditory; but he that knows this Way to Heaven, and derives it daily from the true Fountain, ſhall have his Soul revived with the Water of Life, and enjoy that Quickening which is peculiar to the Saints. *By* this *Faith* thou mayſt *offer Abel's Sacrifice, more excellent than* that of common Men, and *by it obtain Witneſs, that thou art righteous, God teſtifying of thy*

thy Gifts that they are ſincere. When others are ready, like *Baal's Prieſts*, to *cut themſelves*, becauſe their Sacrifice will not burn; thou mayſt breathe the Spirit of *Elijah*, and in the Chariot of Contemplation ſoar aloft, till thy Soul and Sacrifice gloriouſly flame, tho' the Fleſh and the World ſhould caſt upon them all the Water of their oppoſing Enmity. Say not, how can Mortals aſcend to Heaven? Faith hath Wings, and Meditation is its Chariot. Faith is as a Burning Glaſs to thy Sacrifice, and Meditation ſets it to the Face of the Sun; only take it not away too ſoon, but hold it there a while, and thy Soul will feel the happy Effect. *Reader*, art thou not thinking, when thou ſeeſt a lively Chriſtian, and heareſt his lively fervent Prayers, and edifying Diſcourſe, "O how happy a Man is this! O that my Soul were in "this bleſſed Condition!" Why, I here adviſe thee from God, ſet thy Soul conſcientiouſly to this Work, *waſh thee* frequently *in* this *Jordan*, and thy leprous dead Soul will revive, *and thou ſhalt know that there is a God in Iſrael*, and that thou mayſt live a vigorous and joyful Life, if thou doſt not wilfully neglect thy own Mercies.

§ 11. (6) *The frequent believing Views of Glory are the moſt precious Cordials in all Afflictions.* Theſe Cordials, by chearing our Spirits, render our Sufferings far more eaſy; enable us to bear them with Patience and Joy; and ſo ſtrengthen our Reſolutions, that we forſake not

Chriſt for Fear of Trouble. If the Way be ever ſo rough, can it be tedious, if it lead to Heaven? O ſweet Sickneſs, Reproaches, Impriſonments, or Death, accompanied with theſe Taſtes of our future Reſt! This keeps the Suffering from the Soul, ſo that it can only touch the Fleſh. Had it not been for that little (alas, too little) Taſte which I had of Reſt, my Sufferings would have been grievous, and Death more terrible. I may ſay, *I had fainted, unleſs I had believed to ſee the Goodneſs of the Lord in the Land of the Living.* *Unleſs* this promiſed Reſt *had been my Delight, I ſhould then have periſhed in mine Affliction. One Thing have I deſired of the Lord, that will I ſeek after, that I may dwell in the Houſe of the Lord all the Days of my Life, to behold the Beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his Temple. For in the Time of Trouble He ſhall hide me in his Pavilion; in the Secret of his Tabernacle ſhall he hide me; He ſhall ſet me up upon a Rock. And now ſhall mine Head be lifted up above mine Enemies round about me. Therefore will I offer in his Tabernacle Sacrifices of Joy, I will ſing yea I will ſing Praiſes unto the Lord* (c). All Sufferings are nothing to us, ſo far as we have theſe ſupporting Joys. When Perſecution and Fear hath *ſhut the Doors, Chriſt* can *come in, and ſtand in the Midſt, and ſay to his Diſciples, Peace be unto you. Paul* and *Silas* can be in Heaven, even when they are *thruſt into the inner Priſon*, their Bodies ſcourged with *many Stripes,*

(c) Pſalm. xxvii. 13. cxix. 92. xxvii. 4—6.

Stripes, and their Feet faſt in the Stocks. The *Martyrs* find more Reſt in their Flames, than their Perſecutors in their Pomp and Tyranny; becauſe they foreſee the Flames they eſcape, and the Reſt which their fiery Chariot is conveying them to. If *the Son of God* will *walk with us*, we are ſafe *in the Midſt of* thoſe *Flames*, which ſhall devour them that caſt us in. *Abraham went out* of his Country, *not knowing whither he went*; becauſe *he looked for a City which hath Foundations, whoſe Builder and Maker is God. Moſes eſteemed the Reproach of Chriſt greater Riches than the Treaſures in Egypt*; becauſe *he had Reſpect unto the Recompence of Reward. He forſook Egypt, not fearing the Wrath of the King*; becauſe *he endured as ſeeing Him who is inviſible. Others were tortured, not accepting Deliverance, that they might obtain a better Reſurrection.* Even *Jeſus, the Author and Finiſher of our Faith, for the Joy that was ſet before him, endured the Croſs, deſpiſing the Shame, and is ſet down at the right Hand of the Throne of God.* This is the noble Advantage of Faith, it can look on the Means and End together. This is the great Reaſon of our Impatience, and cenſuring of God, becauſe we gaze on the Evil itſelf, but fix not our Thoughts on what's beyond it. They that ſaw Chriſt only on the Croſs, or in the Grave, do *ſhake their Heads*, and think him loſt; but God ſaw him dying, buried, riſing, glorified, and all this at one View. Faith will in this imitate God, ſo far as it hath the Glaſs of a Promiſe to help it.

We ſee God burying us under Ground, but we foreſee not the Spring, when we ſhall all revive. Could we but clearly ſee Heaven, as the End of all God's Dealings with us, ſurely none of his Dealings could be ſo grievous. If God would once raiſe us to this Life, we ſhould find, that tho' Heaven and Sin are at a great Diſtance; yet Heaven and a Priſon, or Baniſhment, Heaven and *the Belly of a Whale*, or a *Den of Lions*, Heaven and conſuming Sickneſs, or invading Death, are at no ſuch Diſtance. But as *Abraham ſaw Chriſt's Day, and rejoiced*; ſo we, in our moſt forlorn State, might ſee that Day when Chriſt ſhall give us Reſt, and therein rejoice. I beſeech thee *Chriſtian*, for the Honour of the Goſpel, and for thy Soul's Comfort, be not to learn this heavenly Art, when in thy greateſt Extremity thou haſt moſt need to uſe it. He that, with *Stephen, ſees the Glory of God, and Jeſus ſtanding on the right Hand of God*, will comfortably bear the Shower of Stones. *The Joy of the Lord is our Strength*, and that Joy muſt be fetch'd from the Place of our Joy; and if we walk without our Strength, how long are we like to endure?

§ 12. (7) *He that hath his Converſation in Heaven, is the profitable Chriſtian to all about him.* When a Man is in a ſtrange Country, how glad is he of the Company of one of his own Nation? How delightful is it to talk of their own Country, their Acquaintance, and Affairs at home? With what Pleaſure did *Joſeph* talk with his Brethren, and enquire after his

his Father, and his Brother *Benjamin?* Is it not ſo to a Chriſtian, to talk with his Brethren that have been above, and enquire after his Father, and Chriſt his Lord? When a worldly Man will talk of nothing but the World, and a Polititian of State-Affairs, and a mere Scholar of human Learning, and a common Profeſſor of his Duties; the heavenly Man will be ſpeaking of Heaven, and the ſtrange Glory his Faith hath ſeen, and our ſpeedy and bleſſed Meeting there. O how refreſhing and uſeful are his Expreſſions! How his Words pierce and melt the Heart, and transform the Hearers into other Men! How doth his *Doctrine drop as the Rain*, and his *Speech diſtil as the Dew, as the ſmall Rain upon the tender Herb, and as the Showers upon the Graſs*, while his Lips *publiſh the Name of the Lord*, and *aſcribe Greatneſs unto his God!* Is not his ſweet Diſcourſe of Heaven, like the *Box of precious Ointment*, which, being *pour'd on the Head of Chriſt, filled the Houſe with the Odour?* All that are near may be refreſhed by it. Happy the People that have a heavenly Miniſter! Happy the Children and Servants that have a heavenly Father or Maſter! Happy the Man that hath a heavenly Companion, who will watch over thy Ways, ſtrengthen thee when thou art weak, chear thee when thou art drooping, and *comfort thee with the Comfort wherewith he himſelf* hath been ſo often *comforted of God!* This is he that will be always blowing at the Spark of

thy ſpiritual Life, and drawing thy Soul to God, and will ſay to thee, as the *Samaritan Woman*, " *Come and ſee one that hath told me* " *all that ever I did*; one that hath loved our " Souls to the Death. *Is not this the Chriſt?* " Is not *the Knowledge of God and Him eternal* " *Life?* Is it not the Glory of the Saints, to *ſee* " *his Glory?*" Come to this Man's Houſe, and ſit at his Table, and he will feaſt thy Soul with the Dainties of Heaven: Travel with him by the Way, and he will direct and quicken thee in thy Journey to Heaven: Trade with him in the World, and he will counſel thee to buy *the Pearl of great Price*. If thou wrong him, he can pardon thee, remembering that Chriſt hath pardoned his greater Offences: If thou be angry, he is meek, conſidering the Meekneſs of his heavenly Pattern: Or if he fall out with you, he is ſoon reconciled, when he recollects that in Heaven you muſt be everlaſting Friends. This is the Chriſtian of the right Stamp, and all about him are the better for him. How unprofitable is the Society of all other Sorts of Chriſtians in Compariſon with this! If a Man ſhould come from Heaven, how would Men long to hear what Reports he would make of the other World, and what he had ſeen, and what the bleſſed there enjoy? Would they not think this Man the beſt Companion, and his Diſcourſe the moſt profitable? Why then do you value the Company of Saints no more, and enquire no more of them, and reliſh their Diſcourſe

courſe no better? For every Saint ſhall go to Heaven in Perſon, and is frequently there in Spirit, and hath often viewed it in the Glaſs of the Goſpel. For my Part, I had rather have the Company of a heavenly-minded Chriſtian, than of the moſt learned Diſputants, or princely Commanders.

§ 13. (8) *No Man ſo highly honoureth God, as he whoſe Converſation is in Heaven.* Is not a Parent diſgraced, when Children feed on Husks, are cloathed in Rags, and keep Company with none but Rogues and Beggars? Is it not ſo to our heavenly Father, when we who call ourſelves his Children, feed on Earth, and the Garb of our Souls is like that of the naked World; and our Hearts familiarly converſe with, and *cleave to the Duſt*, rather than ſtand continually in our Father's Preſence? Surely we live below the Children of a King, not according to the Height of our Hopes, nor the Proviſion of our Father's Houſe, and the great Preparations made for his Saints. It is well we have a Father of tender Bowels, who will own his Children in Rags. If He did not firſt challenge his Intereſt in us, neither ourſelves, nor others could know us to be his People. But when a Chriſtian can live above, and rejoice his Soul with the Things that are unſeen; how is God honoured by ſuch a one! The Lord will teſtify for him, "This Man believes me, and "takes me at my Word; he rejoiceth in my "Promiſe, before he hath Poſſeſſion; he can

" be thankful for what his bodily Eyes never " ſaw; his Rejoicing is not in the Fleſh; his " Heart is with me; he loves my Preſence; " and he ſhall ſurely enjoy it in my Kingdom " for ever. " *Bleſſed are they that have not* " *ſeen, and yet have believed. Them that honour* " *me, I will honour.*" How did God eſteem himſelf honoured by *Caleb* and *Joſhua*, when they went into the promiſed Land, and brought back to their Brethren a Taſte of the Fruits, and ſpake well of the good Land, and encouraged the People? What a Promiſe and Recompence did they receive?

§ 14. (9) *A Soul that doth not ſet its Affections on Things above, diſobeys the Commands, and loſes the moſt gracious and delightful Diſcoveries of the Word of God.* The ſame God that hath commanded thee to believe, and to be a Chriſtian, hath commanded thee to *ſeek thoſe Things which are above, where Chriſt ſitteth on the right Hand of God*, and to *ſet your Affection on Things above, not on Things on the Earth* (d). The ſame God that hath forbidden thee to murder, ſteal, or commit Adultery, hath forbidden thee the Neglect of this great Duty; and dareſt thou wilfully diſobey him? Why not make Conſcience of one, as well as the other? He hath made it thy Duty, as well as the Means of thy Comfort, that a double Bond may engage thee not to forſake thy own Mercies. Beſides, what are all the moſt glorious Deſcriptions of Heaven, all thoſe Diſcoveries

(d) Col. iii. 1. 2.

coveries of our future Bleſſedneſs, and precious Promiſes of our Reſt, but loſt to thee? Are not theſe the Stars in the Firmament of Scripture, and the golden Lines in that Book of God? Methinks thou ſhouldſt not part with one of thoſe Promiſes, no not for a World. As Heaven is the Perfection of all our Mercies, ſo the Promiſes of it in the Goſpel, are the very Soul of the Goſpel. Is a comfortable Word from the Mouth of God of ſuch Worth, that all the Comforts in the World are nothing to it? And doſt thou neglect and overlook ſo many of them? Why ſhould God reveal ſo much of his Counſel, and tell us before Hand of the Joys we ſhall poſſeſs, but to make us know it for our Joy? If it had not been to fill us with the Delights of our fore-known Bleſſedneſs, He might have kept his Purpoſe to himſelf, and never have let us know it till we come to enjoy it. Yea, when we had got Poſſeſſion of our Reſt, He might ſtill have concealed its Eternity from us, and then the Fears of loſing it would have much diminiſhed the Sweetneſs of our Joys. But it hath pleaſed our Father to open his Counſel, and let us know the very Intent of his Heart, that our Joy might be full, and that we might live as the Heirs of ſuch a Kingdom. And ſhall we now overlook all? Shall we live in earthly Cares and Sorrows, and rejoice no more in theſe Diſcoveries, than if the Lord had never wrote them? If thy Prince had but ſealed thee a Patent of ſome Lordſhip, how

how oft wouldſt thou caſt thine Eyes upon it, and make it thy delightful Study, till thou ſhouldſt come to poſſeſs the Dignity itſelf? And hath God ſealed thee a Patent of Heaven, and doſt thou let it lie by thee, as if thou hadſt forgot it? O that our Hearts were as high as our Hopes, and our Hopes as high as theſe infallible Promiſes!

§ 15. (10) *It is but equal that our Hearts ſhould be on God, when the Heart of God is ſo much on us.* If the Lord of Glory can ſtoop ſo low, as to ſet his Heart on ſinful Duſt, methinks we ſhould eaſily be perſuaded to ſet our Hearts on Chriſt and Glory, and aſcend to him in our daily Affections, who ſo much condeſcends to us. *Chriſtian*, doſt thou not perceive that the Heart of God is ſet upon thee, and that He is ſtill minding thee with tender Love, even when thou forgetteſt both thyſelf and Him? Is he not following thee with daily Mercies, moving upon thy Soul, providing for thy Body, preſerving both? Doth He not bear thee continually in the Arms of Love, and promiſe that *all ſhall work together for thy Good*, and ſuit all his Dealings to thy greateſt Advantage, and *give his Angels Charge over thee?* And canſt thou be taken up with the Joys below, and forget thy Lord, who forgets not thee? Unkind Ingratitude! When he ſpeaks of his own Kindneſs for us, hear what he ſays, *Zion ſaid, the Lord hath forſaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a Woman forget her ſucking Child,*

Child, that ſhe ſhould not have Compaſſion on the Son of her Womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee upon the Palms of my Hands; thy Walls are continually before me (e). But when he ſpeaks of our Regards to Him, the Caſe is otherwiſe. *Can a Maid forget her Ornaments, or a Bride her Attire; yet my People have forgotten me Days without Number* (f). As if He ſhould ſay, "You will not riſe one Morning, but you will "remember to cover your Nakedneſs, nor for-"get your Vanity of Dreſs; and are theſe of "more Worth than your God; of more Im-"portance than your eternal Life? And yet "you can forget theſe Day after Day." Give not God Cauſe thus to expoſtulate with us. Rather let our Souls get up to God, and viſit Him every Morning, and our Hearts be towards him every Moment.

§ 16. (11) *Should not our Intereſt in Heaven, and our Relation to it, continually keep our Hearts upon it?* There our Father keeps his Court. We call him, *our Father, which art in Heaven.* Unworthy Children! that can be ſo taken up in their Play, as to be mindleſs of ſuch a Father. There alſo is Chriſt our *Head*, our *Husband*, our *Life*; and ſhall we not look towards him, and ſend to him, as oft as we can, till we come to ſee him Face to Face? Since *the Heavens muſt receive him, untill the Times of Reſtitution of all Things*; let them alſo

(e) Iſaiah xlix. 14—16. (f) Jer. ii. 32.

alſo receive our Hearts with him. There alſo is *new Jeruſalem, which is the Mother of us all* (g). And there are Multitudes of our elder Brethren. There are our Friends and old Acquaintance, whoſe Society in the Fleſh we ſo much delighted in, and whoſe Departure hence we ſo much lamented; and is this no Attractive to thy Thoughts? If they were within thy Reach on Earth, thou wouldſt go and viſit them, and why not oftner viſit them in Spirit, and rejoice before Hand to think of meeting them there? "*Socrates* rejoiced that "he ſhould die, becauſe he *believed* he ſhould "ſee *Homer*, *Heſiod*, and other eminent Per-"ſons. How much more do I rejoice, ſaid "a pious old Miniſter, who am *ſure* to ſee "Chriſt my Saviour, the eternal Son of God, "in his aſſumed Fleſh; beſides ſo many wiſe, "holy and renowned Patriarchs, Prophets, "Apoſtles, *&c.*" A Believer ſhould look to Heaven, and contemplate the bleſſed State of the Saints, and think with himſelf, "Though "I am not yet ſo happy as to be with you, "yet this is my daily Comfort, you are my "Brethren and Fellow-Members in Chriſt, "and therefore your Joys are my Joys, and "your Glory, by this near Relation, is my "Glory; eſpecially while I believe in the ſame "Chriſt, and hold faſt the ſame Faith and "Obedience, by which you were thus dig-"nified, and rejoice in Spirit with you, and "con-

(g) Gal. iv. 26.

" congratulate your Happineſs in my daily " Meditations."

§ 17. Moreover, *our Houſe and Home* is above. *For we know, that if our earthly Houſe of this Tabernacle were diſſolved, we have a Building of God, an Houſe not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens.* Why do we then look no oftner towards it, and *groan earneſtly, deſiring to be cloathed upon with our Houſe which is from Heaven* (h)? If our Home were far meaner, ſure we ſhould remember it, becauſe it is our Home. If you were but baniſhed into a ſtrange Land, how frequently would your Thoughts be at Home? And why is it not thus with us in Reſpect of Heaven? Is not *that* more truly and properly our Home, where we muſt take up our everlaſting Abode, than *this*, which we are every Hour expecting to be ſeparated from, and to ſee no more? We are Strangers, and *that* is our Country. We are Heirs, and *that* is our Inheritance; even *an Inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reſerved in Heaven for us* (i). We are here in continual Diſtreſs, and Want, and there lies our Subſtance; even *a better and an enduring Subſtance* (k). Yea, the very Hope of our Souls is there; all our Hope of Relief from our Diſtreſſes; all our Hope of Happineſs, when here we are miſerable; all this *Hope is laid up for us in Heaven* (l). Why, *beloved Chriſtians*, have we ſo much Intereſt, and ſo few

(h) 2 Cor. v. 1, 2. (i) 1 Pet. i. 4.
(k) Heb. x. 34. (l) Col. i. 5.

few Thoughts there? So near Relation, and ſo little Affection? Doth it become us to be delighted in the Company of Strangers, ſo as to forget our Father, and our Lord? Or to be ſo well pleaſed with thoſe that hate and grieve us, as to forget our beſt and deareſt Friends? Or to be ſo fond of borrowed Trifles, as to forget our own Poſſeſſion and Treaſure? Or to be ſo much impreſſed with Tears and Wants, as to forget our eternal Joy and Reſt? God uſually pleads his Propriety in us; and thence concludes He will do us Good, even becauſe we are his own People, whom He hath choſen out of all the World: Why then do we not plead our Intereſt in Him, and ſo raiſe our Hearts above; even becauſe he is our own God, and becauſe the Place is our own Poſſeſſion? Men commonly over-love and over-value their own Things, and mind them too much. O that we could mind our own Inheritance, and value it half as much as it deſerves!

§ 18. (12) *Once more conſider, there is nothing, but Heaven, worth ſetting our Hearts upon.* If God have them not, who ſhall? If thou mind not thy Reſt, what wilt thou mind? Haſt thou found out ſome other God? Or ſomething that will ſerve thee inſtead of Reſt? Haſt thou found on Earth an eternal Happineſs? Where is it? What is it made of? Who was the Man that found it out? Who was he that laſt enjoyed it? Where dwelt he? What was his Name? Or art thou the firſt that ever diſ-

diſcovered Heaven on Earth? Ah Wretch! truſt not to thy Diſcoveries, boaſt not of thy Gain, till Experience bid thee boaſt. Diſquiet not thyſelf, in looking for that which is not on Earth; leſt thou learn thy Experience with the Loſs of thy Soul, which thou mighteſt have learned on eaſier Terms; even by the Warnings of God in his Word, and the Loſs of thouſands of Souls before thee. If Satan ſhould *take thee up to the Mountain* of Temptation, *and ſhew thee all the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them*; he could ſhew thee nothing that is worthy thy Thoughts, much leſs to be preferred before thy Reſt. Indeed ſo far as Duty and Neceſſity require it, we muſt be content to mind the Things below; but who is he that contains himſelf within the Compaſs of thoſe Limits? And yet if we ever ſo diligently contract our Cares and Thoughts, we ſhall find the leaſt to be bitter and burthenſome. *Chriſtian*, ſee the Emptineſs of all theſe Things, and the Preciouſneſs of the Things above. If thy Thoughts ſhould, like the laborious Bee, go over the World from Flower to Flower, from Creature to Creature, they would bring no Honey or Sweetneſs home, ſave what they gathered from their Relations to Eternity. Though every Truth of God is precious, and ought to be defended; yet even all our *Study of Truth* ſhould be ſtill in Reference to our Reſt: For the Obſervation is too true, *that the Lovers of Controverſies in Religion, have never been warmed with one Spark of the Love of God.*

And

And as for minding the *Affairs of Church and State*; ſo far as they illuſtrate the Providence of God, and tend to the ſettling of the Goſpel, and the Government of Chriſt, and conſequently to the ſaving our own Souls, and thoſe of our Poſterity, they are well worth our diligent Obſervation; but theſe are only their Relations to Eternity. Even all our Dealings in the World, our Buying and Selling, our Eating and Drinking, our Building and Marrying, our Peace and War, ſo far as they relate not to the Life to come, but tend only to the pleaſing of the Fleſh, are not worthy the frequent Thoughts of a Chriſtian. And now doth not thy Conſcience ſay, that there is nothing but Heaven, and the Way to it, that is worth thy minding?

§ 19. Now, *Reader*, are theſe Conſiderations weighty, or not? Have I proved it thy Duty to keep thy Heart on Things above, or have I not? If thou ſay, not; I am confident thou contradicteſt thy own Conſcience. If thou acknowledge thyſelf convinced of the Duty; that very Tongue of thine ſhall condemn thee, and that Confeſſion be pleaded againſt thee, if thou wilfully neglecteſt ſuch a confeſſed Duty. Be thoroughly willing, and the Work is more than half done. I have now a few plain Directions to give you for your Help in this great Work; but, alas! it is in vain to mention them, except you be willing to put them in Practice. However I will propoſe them to thee, and may the Lord perſuade thy Heart to the Work!

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Directions how to lead a heavenly Life upon Earth.

§ 1. (I) *Hindrances to a heavenly Life muſt be avoided; ſuch as,* § 2. (1) *living in any known Sin;* § 3 (2) *an earthly Mind;* § 4. (3) *ungodly Companions;* § 5. (4) *a notional Religion;* § 6. (5) *a haughty Spirit;* § 7. (6) *a ſlothful Spirit;* § 8. *and* (7) *reſting in Preparatives for a heavenly Life, without the Thing itſelf.*——§ 9. (II) *The Duties which will promote a heavenly Life are theſe;* § 10. (1) *Be convinced that Heaven is the only Treaſure and Happineſs;* § 11, 12. (2) *labour to know your Intereſt in it;* § 13. (3) *and how near it is;* § 14. (4) *frequently and ſeriouſly talk of it;* § 15. (5) *endeavour in every Duty to raiſe your Affections nearer to it;* § 16. (6) *to the ſame Purpoſe improve every Object and Event;* § 17, 18. (7) *be much in the angelical Work of Praiſe;* § 19. (8) *poſſeſs your Souls with believing Thoughts of the infinite Love of God;* § 20 (9) *carefully obſerve and cheriſh the Motions of the Spirit of God;* § 21. (10) *nor even neglect the due Care of your bodily Health.*

§ 1. AS thou valueſt the Comforts of a heavenly Converſation, I muſt here charge thee from God,——to *avoid carefully ſome dangerous Hindrances*; and then——*faithfully and diligently to practice ſuch Duties as will eſpecially aſſiſt thee in attaining to a heavenly Life.* And (1) the *Hindrances to be avoided* with all poſſible Care, are,——*living in any known Sin,*——*an earthly Mind,*——*the Company of the Ungodly,*——*a notional Religion.*——*a proud and lofty Spirit,*——*a ſlothful Spirit,*——and *reſting in mere Preparatives for this heavenly Life, without any Acquaintance with the Thing itſelf.*

§ 2. (1) *Living in any known Sin, is a grand Impediment to a heavenly Converſation.* What Havock will this make in thy Soul! O the Joys that this hath deſtroyed! The Ruin it hath made amongſt Men's Graces! The Soul-ſtrengthening Duties it hath hindered! *Chriſtian Reader,* art thou one that haſt uſed Violence with thy Conſcience? Art thou a wilful Neglecter of known Duties, either publick, private, or ſecret? Art thou a Slave to thine Appetite, or to any other commanding Senſe? Art thou a proud Seeker of thine own Eſteem? Art thou a peeviſh and paſſionate Perſon, ready to take Fire at every Word, or Look, or ſuppoſed Slight? Art thou a Deceiver of others in thy Dealings, or one that *will be rich*, right or wrong? If this be thy Caſe, I dare ſay, Heaven and thy Soul are very great Strangers. Theſe *Beams in thine*

Eyes

Eyes will not ſuffer thee to look to *Heaven*; they will be *a Cloud between thee and thy God.* When thou doſt but attempt to ſtudy Eternity, and gather Comforts from the Life to come, thy Sin will preſently look thee in the Face, and ſay, "These Things belong not to thee. How "ſhouldſt thou take Comfort from Heaven, "who takeſt ſo much Pleaſure in the Luſts of "the Fleſh?" How will this damp thy Joys, and make the Thoughts of that Day, and State, become thy Trouble, and not thy Delight! Every wilful Sin will be to thy Comforts, as Water to the Fire; when thou thinkeſt to quicken them, this will quench them. It will utterly indiſpoſe and diſable thee, that thou canſt no more aſcend in divine Meditation, than a Bird can fly when its Wings are clip'd. Sin cuts the very Sinews of this heavenly Life. O *Man!* what a Life doſt thou loſe? What daily Delights doſt thou ſell for a vile Luſt? If Heaven and Hell can meet together, and God become a Lover of Sin, then mayſt thou live in thy Sin, and in the Taſtes of Glory; and have a Converſation in Heaven, though thou cheriſh thy Corruption. And take heed, leſt it baniſh thee from Heaven, as it does thy Heart. And though thou be not guilty, and knoweſt no reigning Sin in thy Soul, think what a ſad Thing it would be, if ever this ſhould prove thy Caſe. Watch therefore; eſpecially reſolve to keep from the Occaſions of Sin, and out of the Way of Temptations. What need have we daily to pray, *Lead*

us not into Temptation, but deliver us from Evil?

§ 3. (2) *An earthly Mind is another Hinderance to be carefully avoided.* *God and Mammon*, Earth and Heaven, cannot both have the Delight of thy Heart. When the heavenly Believer is bleſſing himſelf in his God, and *rejoicing in Hope* of the Glory to come; perhaps thou art bleſſing thyſelf in thy worldly Proſperity, and rejoicing in Hope of thy thriving here. When he is comforting his Soul in the Views of Chriſt, of Angels and Saints, whom he ſhall live with for ever; then thou art comforting thyſelf with thy Wealth, in looking over thy Bills and Bonds, thy Goods, thy Cattle, or thy Buildings, and in thinking of the Favour of the Great, of the Pleaſure of a plentiful Eſtate, of larger Proviſion for thy Children after thee, of the Advancement of thy Family, or the Increaſe of thy Dependants. If Chriſt pronounced him a Fool, that ſaid, *Soul, take thy Eaſe, thou haſt enough laid up for many Years*; how much more ſo art thou, who knowingly ſpeakeſt in thy Heart the ſame Words? Tell me, what Difference between this Fool's Expreſſions, and thy Affections? Remember thou haſt to do with the Searcher of Hearts. Certainly, ſo much as thou delighteſt, and takeſt up thy Reſt, on Earth, ſo much of thy Delight in God is abated. Thine earthly Mind may conſiſt with thy outward Profeſſion and common Duties; but it cannot conſiſt with this heavenly Duty. Thou thyſelf knoweſt how ſeldom and cold, how

how curſory and reſerved, thy Thoughts have been of the Joys above, ever ſince thou didſt trade ſo eagerly for the World. O the curſed Madneſs of many that ſeem to be religious! They thruſt themſelves into a Multitude of Employments, till they are loaded with Labours, and clogged with Cares, that their Souls are as unfit to converſe with God, as a Man to walk with a Mountain on his Back; and as unapt to ſoar in Meditation, as their Bodies to leap above the Sun! And when they have loſt that Heaven upon Earth, which they might have had, they take up with a few rotten Arguments to prove it lawful; though indeed they cannot. I adviſe thee, *Chriſtian*, who haſt taſted the Pleaſures of a heavenly Life, as ever thou wouldſt taſte of them any more, avoid this devouring Gulph of an earthly Mind. If once thou come to this, that thou *wilt be rich*, thou *falleſt into Temptation, and a Snare, and into many fooliſh and hurtful Luſts* (a). Keep theſe Things looſe about thee, like thy upper Garments, that thou mayſt lay them by whenever there is need; but let God and Glory be next thy Heart. Ever remember, *that the Friendſhip of the World is Enmity with God. Whoſoever therefore will be a Friend of the World, is the Enemy of God* (b). *Love not the World, neither the Things that are in the World. If any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him.*

(a) 1 Tim. vi. 9. (b) James iv. 4.

him (c). This is plain Dealing, and happy he that faithfully receives it!

§ 4. (3) *Beware of the Company of the Ungodly.* Not that I would diſſuade thee from neceſſary Converſe, or from doing them any Office of Love; eſpecially, not from endeavouring the good of their Souls, as long as thou haſt any Opportunity or Hope: Nor would I have thee conclude them to be *Dogs* and *Swine*, in order to evade the Duty of Reproof: Nor even to judge them ſuch at all, as long as there is any Hope for the better: Much leſs can I approve of their Practice, who conclude Men *Dogs* or *Swine*, before ever they faithfully and lovingly admoniſh them, or perhaps before they have known them, or ſpoke with them. But it is the unneceſſary Society of ungodly Men, and too much Familiarity with unprofitable Companions, that I diſſuade you from. Not only the open Prophane, the Swearer, the Drunkard, and the Enemies of Godlineſs, will prove hurtful Companions to us, though theſe indeed are chiefly to be avoided; but too frequent Society with Perſons merely civil and moral, whoſe Converſation is empty and unedifying, may much divert our Thoughts from Heaven. Our Backwardneſs is ſuch, that we need the moſt conſtant and powerful Helps. A Stone, or a Clod, is as fit to ariſe and fly in the Air, as our Hearts are naturally to move toward Heaven. You need not hinder the Rocks from flying up to the

(c) 1 John ii. 15.

the Sky; it is ſufficient that you do not help them. And ſurely if our Spirits have not great Aſſiſtance, they may eaſily be kept from ſoaring upward, though they never ſhould meet with the leaſt Impediment. O think of this in the Choice of your Company! When your Spirits are ſo diſpoſed for Heaven, that you need no Help to lift them up, but, as Flames, you are always mounting, and carrying with you all that is in your Way; then you may indeed be leſs careful of your Company; but till then, as you love the Delights of a heavenly Life, be careful herein. What will it advantage thee in a divine Life, to hear how the Market goes, or what the Weather is, or is like to be, or what News is ſtirring? This is the Diſcourſe of earthly Men. What will it conduce to the raiſing thy Heart towards God, to hear that this is an able Miniſter, or that an eminent Chriſtian, or this an excellent Sermon, or that an excellent Book, or to hear ſome difficult but unimportant Controverſy? Yet this, for the moſt Part, is the ſweeteſt Diſcourſe thou art like to have from a formal, ſpeculative, dead-hearted Profeſſor. Nay, if thou hadſt newly been warming thy Heart in the Contemplation of the bleſſed Joys above, would not this Diſcourſe benumb thy Affections, and quickly freeze thy Heart again? I appeal to the Judgment of any Man that hath tried it, and maketh Obſervations on the Frame of his Spirit. Men cannot well talk of one Thing, and mind another, eſpecially Things of

ſuch different Natures. You, *young Men*, who are moſt liable to this Temptation, think ſeriouſly of what I ſay; can you have your Hearts in Heaven, among your roaring Companions in an Alehouſe, or Tavern? Or when you work in your Shops with thoſe, whoſe common Language is Oaths, *Filthineſs, or fooliſh Talking, or Jeſting?* Nay, let me tell you, if you chuſe ſuch Company when you might have better, and find moſt Delight in ſuch, you are ſo far from a heavenly Converſation, that as yet you have no Title to Heaven at all, and in that State ſhall never come there. If your Treaſure was there, your Heart could not be on Things ſo diſtant. In a Word, our Company will be Part of our Happineſs in Heaven, and it is a ſingular Part of our Furtherance to it, or Hindrance from it.

§ 5. (4) *Avoid frequent Diſputes about leſſer Truths, and a Religion that lies only in Opinions.* They are uſually leaſt acquainted with a heavenly Life, who are violent Diſputers about the Circumſtantials of Religion. He, whoſe Religion is all in his Opinions, will be moſt frequently and zealouſly ſpeaking his Opinions; and he, whoſe Religion lies in the Knowledge and Love of God and Chriſt, will be moſt delightfully ſpeaking of that happy Time when he ſhall enjoy them. He is a rare and precious Chriſtian, who is skilful to improve well-known Truths. Therefore let me adviſe you who aſpire after a heavenly Life, not to ſpend too much

much of your Thoughts, your Time, your Zeal, or your Speech, upon Diſputes that leſs concern your Souls; but when Hypocrites are feeding on Husks, or Shells, do you feed on the Joys above. I wiſh you were able to defend every Truth of God, and to this End would read and ſtudy; but ſtill I would have the chief Truths to be chiefly ſtudied, and none to caſt out your Thoughts of Eternity. The leaſt controverted Points are uſually moſt weighty, and of moſt neceſſary frequent Uſe to our Souls. Therefore ſtudy well ſuch Scripture-Precepts as theſe; *him that is weak in the Faith receive ye, but not to doubtful Diſputations* (d). *Fooliſh and unlearned Queſtions avoid, knowing that they do gender Strifes. And the Servant of the Lord muſt not ſtrive* (e). *Avoid fooliſh Queſtions, and Genealogies, and Contentions, and Strivings about the Law; for they are unprofitable and vain* (f). *If any Man teach otherwiſe, and conſent not to wholeſome Words, even the Words of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and to the Doctrine which is according to Godlineſs; he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about Queſtions and Strifes of Words, whereof cometh Envy, Strife, Railings, evil Surmiſings, perverſe Diſputings of Men of corrupt Minds, and deſtitute of the Truth, ſuppoſing that Gain is Godlineſs; from ſuch withdraw thyſelf* (g).

§ 6.

(d) Rom. xiv. 1.
(e) 2 Tim. ii. 23, 24.
(f) Tit. iii. 9.
(g) 1 Tim. vi. 3—5.

§ 6. (5) *Take heed of a proud and lofty Spirit.* There is ſuch an Antipathy between this Sin and God, that thou wilt never get thy Heart near him, nor get him near thy Heart, as long as this prevaileth in it. If it caſt the Angels out of Heaven, it muſt needs keep thy Heart from Heaven. If it caſt our firſt Parents out of Paradiſe, and ſeparated between the Lord and us, and brought his Curſe on all the Creatures here below; it will certainly keep our Hearts from Paradiſe, and increaſe the curſed Separation from our God. Intercourſe with God will keep Men low, and that Lowlineſs will promote their Intercourſe. When a Man is uſed to be much with God, and taken up in the Study of his glorious Attributes, he *abhors himſelf in Duſt and Aſhes*; and that Self-Abhorrence is his beſt Preparative to obtain Admittance to God again. Therefore after a Soul-humbling Day, or in Times of Trouble, when the Soul is loweſt, it uſeth to have free Acceſs to God, and ſavour moſt of the Life above. The Delight of God is in *him that is poor, and of a contrite Spirit, and trembleth at his Word* (h); and the Delight of ſuch a Soul is in God; and where there is mutual Delight, there will be freeſt Admittance, heartieſt Welcome, and moſt frequent Converſe. But God is ſo far from dwelling in the Soul that is proud, that He will not admit it to any near Acceſs. *The Proud he knoweth afar off* (i); *God reſiſteth the Proud, and*

(h) Iſa. lxvi. 2. (i) Pſalm cxxxviii. 6.

and giveth Grace to the Humble (k). A proud Mind is high in Conceit, Self-Eſteem, and carnal Aſpiring; a humble Mind is high indeed in God's Eſteem, and in holy Aſpiring. Theſe two Sorts of High-mindedneſs are moſt of all oppoſite to each other, as we ſee moſt Wars are between Princes and Princes, and not between a Prince and a Plowman. Well then, art thou a Man of Worth in thine own Eyes? Art thou delighted when thou heareſt of thy Eſteem with Men, and much dejected when thou heareſt that they ſlight thee? Doſt thou love thoſe beſt that honour thee, and think meanly of them that do not, though they be otherwiſe Men of Godlineſs and Honeſty? Muſt thou have thy Humours fulfilled, and thy Judgment be a Rule, and thy Word a Law to all about thee? Are thy Paſſions kindled, if thy Word or Will be croſſed? Art thou ready to judge Humility to be ſordid Baſeneſs, and knoweſt not how to ſubmit to humble Confeſſion, when thou haſt ſinned againſt God, or injured thy Brother? Art thou one that lookeſt ſtrange at the godly Poor, and art almoſt aſhamed to be their Companion? Canſt thou not ſerve God in a low Place, as well as a high? Are thy Boaſtings reſtrained more by Prudence or Artifice than Humility? Doſt thou deſire to have all Men's Eyes upon thee, and to hear them ſay, *This is he?* Art thou unacquainted with the Deceitfulneſs and Wickedneſs of thy Heart? Art thou more ready to de-

(k) 1 Pet. v. 5.

defend thy Innocence, than accuſe thyſelf, or confeſs thy Fault? Canſt thou hardly bear a cloſe Reproof, or digeſt plain Dealing? If theſe Symptoms be undeniably in thy Heart, thou art a proud Perſon. There is too much of Hell abiding in thee, to have any Acquaintance with Heaven; thy Soul is too like the Devil, to have any Familiarity with God. A proud Man makes himſelf his God, and ſets up himſelf as his Idol; how then can his Affections be ſet on God? How can he poſſibly have his Heart in Heaven? Invention and Memory may poſſibly furniſh his Tongue with humble and heavenly Expreſſions, but in his Spirit there is no more Heaven than there is Humility. I ſpeak the more of it, becauſe it is the moſt common and dangerous Sin in Morality, and moſt promotes the great Sin of Infidelity. O *Chriſtian!* if thou wouldſt live continually in the Preſence of thy Lord, lie in the Duſt, and he will thence take thee up. *Learn of Him to be meek and lowly, and thou ſhalt find Reſt unto thy Soul* (l). Otherwiſe thy Soul will be *like the troubled Sea, when it cannot reſt, whoſe Waters caſt up Mire and Dirt* (m); and inſtead of theſe ſweet Delights in God, thy Pride will fill thee with perpetual Diſquiet. As he *that humbleth himſelf as a little Child*, ſhall hereafter *be greateſt in the Kingdom of Heaven* (n); ſo ſhall he now be greateſt in the Foretaſtes of that Kingdom. God *dwells with a contrite and humble Spirit*, to

(l) Mat. xi. 29. (m) Iſa. lvii. 20. (n) Mat. xviii. 4.

to revive the Spirit of the humble, and to revive the Heart of the contrite ones (o). Therefore *humble yourſelves in the Sight of the Lord, and he ſhall lift you up* (p). And *when others are caſt down, then thou ſhalt ſay, there is lifting up, and he ſhall ſave the humble Perſon* (q).

§ 7. (6) *A ſlothful Spirit is another Impediment to this heavenly Life.* And I verily think, there is nothing hinders it more than this in Men of a good Underſtanding. If it were only the Exerciſe of the Body, the moving of the Lips, the bending of the Knee, Men would as commonly ſtep to Heaven, as they go to viſit a Friend. But to ſeparate our Thoughts and Affections from the World, to draw forth all our Graces, and increaſe each in its proper Object, and hold them to it till the Work proſpers in our Hands; this, this is the Difficulty. *Reader*, Heaven is above thee, and doſt thou think to travel this ſteep Aſcent without Labour and Reſolution? Canſt thou get that earthly Heart to Heaven, and bring that backward Mind to God, while thou lieſt ſtill, and takeſt thine Eaſe? If lying down at the Foot of the Hill, and looking toward the Top, and wiſhing we were there, would ſerve the Turn, then we ſhould have daily Travellers for Heaven. But *the Kingdom of Heaven ſuffereth Violence, and the Violent take it by Force* (r). There muſt be Violence uſed to get theſe firſt Fruits, as

(o) Iſa. lvii. 15. (p) James iv. 10.
(q) Job xxii. 29. (r) Mat. xi. 12.

as well as to get the full Poſſeſſion. Doſt thou not feel it ſo, though I ſhould not tell thee? Will thy Heart get upwards, except thou drive it? Thou knoweſt that Heaven is all thy Hopes, that nothing below can yield thee Reſt, that a Heart, ſeldom thinking of Heaven, can fetch but little Comfort thence; and yet doſt thou not loſe thy Opportunities, and lie below, when thou ſhouldſt walk above, and live with God? Doſt thou not commend the Sweetneſs of a heavenly Life, and judge thoſe the beſt Chriſtians that uſe it, and yet never try it thyſelf? As the Sluggard that ſtretches himſelf on his Bed, and cries, O that this were Working! So doſt thou talk, and trifle, and live at thy Eaſe, and ſay, O that I could get my Heart to Heaven! How many read Books, and hear Sermons, expecting to hear of ſome eaſier Way, or to meet with a ſhorter Courſe to Comfort, than they are ever like to find in Scripture? Or they aſk for Directions for a heavenly Life, and if the hearing them will ſerve, they will be heavenly Chriſtians; but if we ſhew them their Work, and tell them, they cannot have theſe Delights on eaſier Terms, then they leave us, as *the young Man* left Chriſt, *ſorrowful*. If thou art convinced, *Reader*, that this Work is neceſſary to thy Comfort, ſet upon it reſolutely: If thy Heart draw back, force it on with the Command of Reaſon: If thy Reaſon begin to diſpute, produce the Command of God, and urge thy

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own Neceſſity, with the other Conſiderations ſuggeſted in the former Chapter. Let not ſuch an incomparable Treaſure lie before thee, with thy Hand in thy Boſom; nor thy Life be a continual Vexation, when it might be a continual Feaſt, only becauſe thou wilt not exert thyſelf. Sit not ſtill with a diſconſolate Spirit, while Comforts grow before thine Eyes, like a Man in the Midſt of a Garden of Flowers, that will not riſe to get them, and partake of their Sweetneſs. This I know, Chriſt is the Fountain: but the Well is deep, and thou muſt get forth this Water before thou canſt be refreſhed with it. I know, ſo far as you are ſpiritual, you need not all this ſtriving and Violence; but in part you are carnal, and as long as it is ſo, there is need of Labour. It was a Cuſtom of the *Parthians*, not to give their Children any Meat in the Morning, before they ſaw the Sweat on their Faces with ſome Labour. And you ſhall find this to be God's uſual Courſe, not to give his Children the Taſte of his Delights, till they begin to ſweat in ſeeking after them. Judge, therefore, whether a heavenly Life, or thy carnal Eaſe, be better; and, as a wiſe Man, make thy Choice accordingly. Yet let me add for thy Encouragement, *Thou needeſt not employ thy Thoughts more than thou now doſt; it is only to fix them upon better and more pleaſant Objects.* Employ but as many ſerious Thoughts every Day upon the excellent Glory of the Life to come, as thou now doſt on worldly Affairs, yea,

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on Vanities and Impertinences, and thy Heart will ſoon be at Heaven. On the whole, it is *the Field of the Slothful*, that is *all grown over with Thorns and Nettles*; and *the Deſire of the Slothful killeth his* Joys, *for his Hands refuſe to labour*; and it is *the ſlothful Man ſaith, there is a Lion in the Way, a Lion is in the Streets. As the Door turneth upon its Hinges, ſo doth the Slothful upon his Bed. The Slothful hideth his Hand in his Boſom, it grieveth him to bring it again to his Mouth* (s), though it be to feed himſelf with the Food of Life. What is this but throwing away our own Conſolations, and conſequently the precious Blood that bought them? For *he that is ſlothful in his Work, is Brother to him that is a great Waſter* (t). Apply this to thy ſpiritual Work, and ſtudy well the Meaning of it.

§ 8. (7) *Contentment with the mere Preparatives to this heavenly Life, while we are utter Strangers to the Life itſelf, is alſo a dangerous and ſecret Hindrance.* When we take up with the mere Study of heavenly Things, and the Notions of them, or the talking with one another about them; as if this were enough to make us heavenly. None are in more Danger of this Snare, than thoſe that are employed in leading the Devotions of others, eſpecially Preachers of the Goſpel. O how eaſily may ſuch be deceived! While they do nothing ſo much as read, and ſtudy of Heaven; preach and pray, and

(s) Prov. xxvi. 30, 31. xxi. 25. xxvi. 13—15.
(t) Prov. xviii. 9.

and talk of Heaven; is not this the heavenly Life? Alas! all this is but mere Preparation: This is but collecting the Materials, not erecting the Building itſelf: It is but gathering the Manna for others, and not eating and digeſting it ourſelves. As he that ſits at Home may draw exact Maps of Countries, and yet never ſee them, nor travel toward them; ſo may you deſcribe to others the Joys of Heaven, and yet never come near it in your own Hearts. A blind Man, by Learning, may diſpute of Light and Colours; ſo may you ſet forth to others that heavenly Light, which never enlightened your own Souls, and bring that Fire for the Hearts of your People, which never warmed your own Hearts. What heavenly Paſſages had *Balaam* in his Prophecies, yet how little of it in his Spirit? Nay, we are under a more ſubtle Temptation, than any other Men, to draw us from this heavenly Life. Studying and preaching of Heaven more reſembles a heavenly Life, than thinking and talking of the World does; and the Reſemblance is apt to deceive us. This is to die the moſt miſerable Death, even to famiſh ourſelves, becauſe we have Bread on our Tables; and to die for Thirſt, while we draw Water for others, thinking it enough that we have daily to do with it, though we never drink for the Refreſhment of our own Souls.

§ 9. (II) HAVING thus ſhewed thee what Hindrances will reſiſt thee in the Work, I expect that thou reſolve againſt them, conſider

them seriously, and avoid them faithfully, or else thy Labour will be in vain. I must also tell thee, that I here expect thy Promise, as thou valuest the Delights of these Fore-tastes of Heaven, to *make Conscience of performing the following Duties*; the reading of which, without their constant Practice, will not bring Heaven into thy Heart. Particularly,——*be convinced that Heaven is the only Treasure and Happiness*;——*labour to know that it is thy own*;——and *how near it is*;——*frequently and seriously talk of it*;——*endeavour to raise thy Affections nearer to it in every Duty*;——*to the same Purpose improve every Object and Event*;——*be much in the angelical Work of Praise*;——*possess thy Soul with believing Thoughts of the infinite Love of God*;——*carefully observe and cherish the Motions of the Spirit of God*;——*nor* even *neglect the due Care of thy bodily Health.*

§ 10. (1) *Be convinced that Heaven is the only Treasure and Happiness, and labour to know what a Treasure and Happiness it is.* If thou do not believe it to be the chief Good, thou wilt never set thy Heart upon it; and this Conviction must sink into thy Affections; for if it be only a Notion, it will have little Efficacy. If *Eve* once supposes she sees more Worth in the forbidden Fruit, than in the Love and Enjoyment of God, no Wonder if it have more of her Heart than God. If your Judgment once prefers the Delights of the Flesh, before the Delights in the Presence of God, it is im-

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poſſible your Heart ſhould be in Heaven. As it is Ignorance of the Emptineſs of Things below that makes Men ſo over-value them; ſo it is Ignorance of the high Delights above, which is the Cauſe that Men ſo little mind them. If you ſee a Purſe of Gold, and believe it to be but Counters, it will not entice your Affections to it. It is not the real Excellence of a Thing itſelf, but its known Excellence, that excites Deſire. If an ignorant Man ſee a Book containing the Secrets of Arts or Sciences, he values it no more than a common Piece, becauſe he knows not what is in it; but he that knows it, highly values it, and can even forbear his Meat, Drink, and Sleep to read it. As the *Jews* killed the *Meſſiah*, while they waited for him, becauſe they did not know him; ſo the World cries out for Reſt, and buſily ſeeks for Delight and Happineſs, becauſe they know it not; for did they thoroughly know what it is, they could not ſo ſlight the everlaſting Treaſure.

§ 11. (2) *Labour alſo to know that Heaven is thy own Happineſs.* We may confeſs Heaven to be the beſt Condition, though we deſpair of enjoying it; and we may deſire and ſeek it, if we ſee the Attainment but probable; but we can never delightfully rejoice in it, till we are in ſome Meaſure perſuaded of our Title to it. What Comfort is it to a Man that is naked, to ſee the rich Attire of others? What Delight is it for a Man that hath not a Houſe to put his Head in, to ſee the ſumptuous Buildings of others?

Would not all this rather increaſe his Anguiſh, and make him more ſenſible of his own Miſery? So for a Man to know the Excellencies of Heaven, and not know whether ever he ſhall enjoy them, may raiſe Deſire and urge Purſuit, but he will have little Joy. Who will ſet his Heart on another Man's Poſſeſſions? If your Houſes, your Goods, your Cattle, your Children, were not your own, you would leſs mind them, and leſs delight in them. O *Chriſtian!* reſt not, therefore, till you can call this Reſt your own: Bring thy Heart to the Bar of Trial: Set the Qualifications of the Saints on one Side, and of thy Soul on the other, and then judge how near they reſemble. Thou haſt the ſame Word to judge thyſelf by now, as thou muſt be judged by at the great Day. Miſtake not the Scripture's Deſcription of a Saint, that thou neither acquit, nor condemn thyſelf upon Miſtakes. For as groundleſs Hopes tend to Confuſion, and are the greateſt Cauſe of moſt Men's Damnation; ſo groundleſs Doubts tend to, and are the great Cauſe of, the Saints Perplexity and Diſtreſs. Therefore lay thy Foundation for Trial ſafely, and proceed in the Work deliberately, and reſolutely, nor give over till thou canſt ſay, either thou haſt, or haſt not yet a Title to this Reſt. O! if Men did truly know, that God is their own Father, and Chriſt their own Redeemer and Head, and that thoſe are their own everlaſting Habitations, and that there they muſt abide and be happy for ever; how could they chuſe but

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be tranſported with the Fore-Thoughts thereof? If a Chriſtian could but look upon Sun, Moon, and Stars, and reckon all his own in Chriſt, and ſay, "Theſe are the Bleſſings that "my Lord hath procured me, and Things in-"comparably greater than theſe;" what holy Raptures would his Spirit feel?

§ 12. The more do they ſin againſt their own Comforts, as well as againſt the Grace of the Goſpel, who plead for their Unbelief, and cheriſh diſtruſtful Thoughts of God, and injurious Thoughts of their Redeemer; who repreſent the Covenant, as if it were of Works, and not of Grace; and Chriſt as an Enemy, rather than a Saviour; as if he were willing they ſhould die in their Unbelief, when he hath invited them ſo often, and ſo affectionately, and ſuffered the Agonies that they ſhould ſuffer. Wretches that we are! to be keeping up Jealouſies of our Lord, when we ſhould be rejoicing in his Love. As if any Man could chuſe Chriſt, before Chriſt hath choſen him; or any Man were more willing to be happy, than Chriſt is to make him happy. Away with theſe injurious, if not blaſphemous, Thoughts! If ever thou haſt harboured ſuch Thoughts in thy Breaſt, caſt them from thee, and take Heed how thou ever entertaineſt them more. God hath written the Names of his People in Heaven, as you uſe to write your Names, or Marks, on your Goods; and ſhall we be attempting to raſe them out, and to write our Names on the

Doors of Hell? But bleſſed be *God, whoſe Foundation ſtandeth ſure* (u); and who *keepeth us by his Power thro' Faith unto Salvation* (w).

§ 13. (3) *Labour to apprehend how near thy Reſt is.* What we think near at Hand, we are more ſenſible of, than that which we behold at a Diſtance. When Judgments or Mercies are far off, we talk of them with little Concern; but when they draw cloſe to us, we tremble at, or rejoice in, them. This makes Men think on Heaven ſo inſenſibly, becauſe they conceit it at too great a Diſtance; they look on it as twenty, thirty, or forty Years off. How much better were it to receive *the Sentence of Death in ourſelves* (x), and to look on Eternity as near at Hand? While I am thinking, and writing of it, it haſteth near, and I am even entering into it before I am aware. While thou art reading this, whoever thou art, Time poſteth on, and thy Life will be gone, *as a Tale that is told.* If you verily believed you ſhould die To-morrow, how ſeriouſly would you think of Heaven To-night? When *Samuel* had told *Saul, To-morrow ſhalt thou be with me*; this ſtruck him to the Heart. And if Chriſt ſhould ſay to a believing Soul, To-morrow ſhalt thou be with me; this would bring him in Spirit to Heaven before Hand. Do but ſuppoſe that you are ſtill entering into Heaven, and it will greatly help you more ſeriouſly to mind it.

§ 4.

(u) 2 Tim. ii. 19. (w) 1 Pet. i. 5. (x) 2 Cor. i. 9.

§ 14. (4) *Let thy eternal Reſt be the Subject of thy frequent ſerious Diſcourſe*; eſpecially with thoſe that can ſpeak from their Hearts, and are ſeaſoned themſelves with a heavenly Nature. It is Pity Chriſtians ſhould ever meet together, without ſome Talk of their meeting in Heaven, or of the Way to it, before they part. It is Pity ſo much Time is ſpent in vain Converſation, and uſeleſs Diſputes, and not a ſerious Word of Heaven among them. Methinks we ſhould meet together on purpoſe, to warm our Spirits with diſcourſing of our Reſt. To hear a Chriſtian ſet forth that bleſſed, glorious State, with Life and Power, from the Promiſes of the Goſpel, methinks ſhould make us ſay, *Did not our Hearts burn within us, while he opened to us the Scriptures* (y)? If a *Felix* will *tremble*, when he hears his Judgment powerfully repreſented, why ſhould not the Believer be revived, when he hears his eternal Reſt deſcribed? Wicked Men can be delighted in talking together of their Wickedneſs; and ſhould not Chriſtians then be delighted in talking of Chriſt; and the Heirs of Heaven in talking of their Inheritance? This may make our Hearts revive, as it did *Jacob*'s to hear the Meſſage that called him to *Goſhen*, and to ſee the Chariots that ſhould bring him to *Joſeph*. O that we were furniſhed with Skill and Reſolution, to turn the Stream of Men's common Diſcourſe to theſe more ſublime and precious Things! And when Men

(y) Luke xxiv. 32.

begin to talk of Things unprofitable, that we could tell how to put in a Word for Heaven, and ſay, as *Peter* of his bodily Food, *Not ſo, for I have never eaten any Thing that is common or unclean!* O the Good that we might both do and receive by this Courſe! Had it not been to deter us from unprofitable Converſation, Chriſt would not have talked of our *giving an Account of every idle Word in the Day of Judgment* (z). Say then, as the Pſalmiſt, when you are in Company, *Let my Tongue cleave to the Roof of my Mouth, if I prefer not Jeruſalem above my chief Joy* (a). Then you ſhall find it true, that *a wholeſome Tongue is a Tree of Life* (b).

§ 15. (5) *Endeavour in every Duty to raiſe thy Affections nearer to Heaven.* God's End in the Inſtitution of his Ordinances was, that they ſhould be as ſo many Steps to advance us to our Reſt, and by which, in Subordination to Chriſt, we might daily aſcend in our Affections. Let this be thy End in uſing them, and doubtleſs they will not be unſucceſsful. How have you been rejoiced by a few Lines from a Friend, when you could not ſee him Face to Face? and may we not have Intercourſe with God in his Ordinances, though our Perſons be yet ſo far remote? May not our Spirits rejoice in reading thoſe Lines, which contain our Legacy and Charter for Heaven? With what Gladneſs and Triumph may we read the Expreſſions of divine Love and hear of our celeſtial Country, though we

(z) Mat. xii. 36. (a) Pſ. cxxxvii. 6. (b) Prov. xv. 4.

we have not yet the Happineſs to behold it? Men that are ſeparated by Sea and Land, can by Letters carry on great and gainful Trades; and may not a Chriſtian, in the wiſe Improvement of Duties, drive on this happy Trade for Reſt? Come then, renounce Formality, Cuſtom, and Applauſe, and kneel down in ſecret or publick Prayer, with Hope to get thy Heart nearer to God before thou riſeſt up. When thou openeſt the Bible, or other Book, hope to meet with ſome Paſſage of divine Truth, and ſuch Bleſſing of the Spirit with it, as will give thee a fuller Taſte of Heaven. When thou art going to the Houſe of God, ſay, "I hope to meet "with ſomewhat from God to raiſe my Affec-"tions, before I return; I hope the Spirit will "give me the Meeting, and ſweeten my Heart "with thoſe celeſtial Delights; I hope Chriſt "will *appear to me in that Way, and ſhine about* "*me with Light from Heaven*; let me hear this "inſtructing and reviving Voice, and cauſe the "*Scales to fall from my Eyes*, that I may ſee "more of that Glory than I ever yet ſaw. I "hope, before I return, my Lord will bring "my Heart within the View of Reſt, and ſet "it before his Father's Preſence, that I may "return, as *the Shepherds* from the heavenly "Viſion, *glorifying and praiſing God for all the* "*Things I have heard and ſeen.*" When the *Indians* firſt ſaw that the *Engliſh* could converſe together by Letters, they thought there was ſome Spirit incloſed in them. So would By-

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ſtanders admire, when Chriſtians have Communion with God in Duties, what there is in thoſe Scriptures, in that Sermon, in this Prayer, that fills their Hearts ſo full of Joy, and ſo tranſports them above themſelves. Certainly God would not fail us in our Duties, if we did not fail ourſelves. Remember, therefore, always to pray for your Miniſter, that God would put ſome divine Meſſage into his Mouth, which may leave a heavenly Reliſh on your Spirit.

§ 16. (6) *Improve every Object, and every Event, to mind thy Soul of its approaching Reſt.* As all Providences and Creatures are Means to our Reſt, ſo they point us to that, as their End. God's ſweeteſt Dealings with us at the preſent would not be half ſo ſweet as they are, if they did not intimate ſome further Sweetneſs. Thou takeſt but the bare Earneſt, and overlookeſt the main Sum, when thou receiveſt thy Mercies, and forgetteſt thy Crown. O that Chriſtians were ſkilful in this Art! You can open your Bibles; learn to open the Volumes of Creatures and Providences, to read there alſo of God and Glory. Thus we might have a fuller Taſte of Chriſt and Heaven in every common Meal, than moſt Men have in a Sacrament. If thou proſper in the World, let it make thee more ſenſible of thy perpetual Proſperity. If thou art weary with Labour, let it make the Thoughts of thy eternal Reſt more ſweet. If Things go croſs, let thy Deſires be more earneſt to have Sorrows and Sufferings for ever ceaſe. Is thy Body refreſhed with Food,

or

or Sleep? remember the unconceivable Refreſhment with Chriſt. Doſt thou hear any good News? remember what glad Tidings it will be to hear *the Trump of God*, and the applauding Sentence of Chriſt? Art thou delighted with the Society of the Saints? remember what the perfect Society in Heaven will be. Is God communicating Himſelf to thy Spirit? remember the Time of thy higheſt Advancement, when both thy Communion and Joy ſhall be full. Doſt thou hear the raging Noiſe of the Wicked, and the Confuſions of the World? think of the bleſſed Harmony in Heaven. Doſt thou hear the Tempeſt of War? remember the Day when thou ſhalt be in perfect Peace, under the Wings of the Prince of Peace for ever. Thus every Condition, and Creature, affords us Advantages for a heavenly Life, if we had but Hearts to improve them.

§ 17. (7) *Be much in the angelical Work of Praiſe.* The more heavenly the Employment, the more will it make the Spirit heavenly. Praiſing God is the Work of Angels and Saints in Heaven, and will be our own everlaſting Work; and if we were more in it now, we ſhould be liker to what we ſhall be then. As Deſire, Faith, and Hope, are of ſhorter Continuance than Love and Joy; ſo alſo Preaching, Prayer, and Sacraments, and all Means for expreſſing and confirming our Faith and Hope, ſhall ceaſe, when our triumphant Expreſſions of Love and Joy ſhall abide for ever. *The livelieſt Emblem of Heaven that I know upon Earth, is,*

when

when the People of God, in the deep Senſe of his Excellency and Bounty, from Hearts abounding with Love and Joy, join together, both in Heart and Voice, in the chearful and melodious ſinging of his Praiſes. Theſe Delights, like the Teſtimony of the Spirit, witneſs themſelves to be of God, and bring the Evidences of their heavenly Parentage along with them.

§ 18. LITTLE do we know how we wrong ourſelves, by ſhutting out of our Prayers the Praiſes of God, or allowing them ſo narrow a Room as we uſually do, while we are copious enough in our Confeſſions and Petitions. *Reader*, I intreat thee, remember this; let Praiſes have a larger Room in thy Duties; keep Matter ready at Hand to feed thy Praiſe, as well as Matter for Confeſſion and Petition. To this End, ſtudy the Excellencies and Goodneſs of the Lord, as frequently as thy own Wants and Unworthineſs; the Mercies thou haſt received, and thoſe which are promiſed, as often as the Sins thou haſt committed. *Praiſe is comely for the Upright. Whoſo offereth Praiſe, glorifieth God. Praiſe ye the Lord, for the Lord is good; ſing Praiſes unto his Name, for it is pleaſant* (c). *Let us offer the Sacrifice of Praiſe to God continually, that is, the Fruit of our Lips, giving Thanks to his Name* (d). Had not *David* a moſt heavenly Spirit, who was ſo much in this heavenly Work? Doth it not ſometimes raiſe our Hearts, when we only read *the Song of Moſes*, and *the Pſalms of David?* How much more would

(c) Pſalm xxxiii. 1. l. 23. cxxxv. 3. (d) Heb. xiii. 15.

would it raiſe and refreſh us, to be ſkilful and frequent in the Work ourſelves? O the Madneſs of Youth, that lay out their Vigour of Body and Mind upon vain Delights and fleſhly Luſts, which is ſo fit for the nobleſt Work of Man! And O the ſinful Folly of many of the Saints, who drench their Spirits in continual Sadneſs, and waſte their Days in Complaints and Groans, and ſo make themſelves both in Body and Mind, unfit for this ſweet and heavenly Work! Inſtead of joining with the People of God in his Praiſes, they are queſtioning their Worthineſs, and ſtudying their Miſeries; and ſo rob God of his Glory, and themſelves of their Conſolation. But the greateſt Deſtroyer of our Comfort in this Duty, is our taking up with the Tune and Melody, and ſuffering the Heart to be idle, which ought to perform the principal Part of the Work, and uſe the Melody to revive and exhilarate itſelf.

§ 19. (8) *Ever keep thy Soul poſſeſſed with believing Thoughts of the infinite Love of God.* Love is the Attractive of Love. Few ſo vile, but will love thoſe that love them. No Doubt it is the Death of our heavenly Life, to have hard Thoughts of God, to conceive of him as one that would rather damn than ſave us. This is to put the bleſſed God into the Similitude of Satan. When our Ignorance and Unbelief have drawn the moſt deformed Picture of God in our Imaginations, then we complain that we cannot love Him, nor delight in Him. This is the Caſe of many thouſand Chriſtians. Alas, that

that we ſhould thus blaſpheme God, and blaſt our own Joys! Scripture aſſures us, that *God is Love* (e); that *Fury is not in Him* (f); that *he hath no Pleaſure in the Death of the Wicked, but that the Wicked turn from his Way and live* (g). Much more hath he teſtified his Love to his Choſen, and his full Reſolution effectually to ſave them. O that we could always think of God, as we do of a Friend; as of one that unfeignedly loves us, even more than we do ourſelves; whoſe very Heart is ſet upon us to do us Good, and hath therefore provided for us an everlaſting Dwelling with Himſelf; it would not then be ſo hard to have our Hearts ever with Him! Where we love moſt heartily, we ſhall think moſt ſweetly, and moſt freely. I fear moſt Chriſtians think higher of the Love of a hearty Friend, than of the Love of God; and what Wonder then if they love their Friends better than God, and truſt them more confidently than God, and had rather live with them than with God?

§ 20. (9) *Carefully obſerve and cheriſh the Motions of the Spirit of God.* If ever thy Soul get above this Earth, and get acquainted with this heavenly Life, the Spirit of God muſt be to thee, as the Chariot to *Elijah*; yea, the very living Principle by which thou muſt move and aſcend. O then grieve not thy Guide, quench not thy Life, knock not off thy Chariot-Wheels! You little think how much the Life of all your Graces, and the Happineſs of your Souls, depend

(e) 1 John iv. 16. (f) Iſa. xxvii. 4. (g) Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

pend upon your ready and cordial Obedience to the Spirit. When the Spirit urges thee to ſecret Prayer; or forbids thee thy known Tranſgreſſions; or points out to thee the Way in which thou ſhouldſt go; and thou wilt not regard, no wonder if Heaven and thy Soul be ſtrange. If thou wilt not follow the Spirit, while it would draw thee to Chriſt and thy Duty; how ſhould it lead thee to Heaven, and bring thy Heart into the Preſence of God? What ſupernatural Help, what bold Acceſs, ſhall the Soul find in its Approaches to the Almighty, that conſtantly obeys the Spirit? And how backward, how dull, how aſhamed, will he be in theſe Addreſſes, who hath often broke away from the Spirit that would have guided him? *Chriſtian Reader*, doſt thou not feel ſometimes a ſtrong Impreſſion to retire from the World, and draw near to God? Do not diſobey, but take the Offer, and hoiſt up thy Sails while this bleſſed Gale may be had. The more of the Spirit we reſiſt, the deeper will it wound; and the more we obey, the ſpeedier will be our Pace.

§ 21. (10) *I adviſe thee, as a farther Help to this heavenly Life, not to neglect the due Care of thy bodily Health.* Thy Body is an uſeful Servant, if thou give it its Due, and no more than its Due; but it is a moſt devouring Tyrant, if thou ſuffer it to have what it unreaſonably deſires; and it is as a blunted Knife, if thou unjuſtly deny it what is neceſſary to its Support.

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When we conſider, how frequently Men offend on both Extremes, and how few uſe their Bodies aright, we cannot wonder if they be much hindered in their Converſe with Heaven. Moſt Men are Slaves to their Appetite, and can ſcarce deny any Thing to the Fleſh, and are therefore willingly carried by it to their Sports, or Profits, or vain Companions, when they ſhould raiſe their Minds to God and Heaven. As you love your Souls, *Make not Proviſion for the Fleſh, to fulfil the Luſts thereof* (h); but remember, *to be carnally minded, is Death; becauſe the carnal Mind is Enmity againſt God, for it is not ſubject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the Fleſh cannot pleaſe God. Therefore, Brethren, we are Debtors, not to the Fleſh, to live after the Fleſh. For if ye live after the Fleſh ye ſhall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the Deeds of the Body, ye ſhall live* (i). There are a few, who much hinder their heavenly Joy, by denying the Body its Neceſſaries, and ſo making it unable to ſerve them: If ſuch wronged their Fleſh only, it would be no great Matter; but they wrong their Souls alſo; as he that ſpoils the Houſe, injures the Inhabitants. When the Body is ſick, and the Spirits languiſh, how heavily do we move in the Thoughts and Joys of Heaven?

(h) Rom. xiii. 14. (i) Rom. viii. 6—8, 12, 13.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

The Nature of heavenly Contemplation; with the Time, Place, and Temper fitteſt for it.

§ 1. *The Duty of heavenly Contemplation is recommended to the Reader,* § 2. *and defined:* § 3—6. (I) *The Definition is illuſtrated:* § 7. (II) *The Time fitteſt for it is repreſented, as,* § 8. (1) *ſtated;* § 9—12. (2) *frequent;* § 13. *and* (3) *ſeaſonable, every Day, and particularly every Lord's Day;* § 14—17. *but more eſpecially, when our Hearts are warmed with a Senſe of divine Things; or when we are afflicted, or tempted; or when we are near Death:* § 18. (III) *The fitteſt Place for it, is the moſt retired:* § 19. (IV) *And the fitteſt Temper for it, is,* § 20. (1) *when our Minds are moſt clear of the World,* § 21. (2) *and moſt ſolemn and ſerious.*

§ 1. ONCE more I intreat thee, *Reader,* as thou makeſt Conſcience of a revealed Duty, and dareſt not wilfully reſiſt the Spirit; as thou valueſt the high Delights of a Saint, and the Soul-raviſhing Exerciſe of heavenly Contemplation; that thou diligently ſtu-

dy, and ſpeedily, and faithfully practiſe, the following Directions. If, by this Means, thou doſt not find an Increaſe of all thy Graces, and doſt not grow beyond the Stature of common Chriſtians, and art not made more ſerviceable in thy Place, and more precious in the Eyes of all diſcerning Perſons, if thy Soul enjoy not more Communion with God, and thy Life be not fuller of Comfort, and haſt it not readier by thee at a dying Hour; then caſt away theſe Directions, and exclaim againſt me for ever as a Deceiver.

§ 2. The Duty which I preſs upon thee ſo earneſtly, and in the Practice of which I am now to direct thee, is, "The ſet and ſolemn "Acting of all the Powers of thy Soul in Me-"ditation upon thy everlaſting Reſt." More fully to explain the Nature of this Duty, I will here—*illuſtrate a little the Deſcription itſelf*,—then point out *the fitteſt Time*,——*Place*,—— and *Temper of Mind for it*.

§ 3. (1) *It is not improper to illuſtrate a little the Manner in which we have deſcribed this Duty of Meditation, or the conſidering and contemplating of ſpiritual Things.* It is confeſſed to be a Duty by all, but practically denied by moſt. Many that make Conſcience of other Duties, eaſily neglect this. They are troubled, if they omit a Sermon, a Faſt, or a Prayer in publick or private; yet were never troubled that they have omitted *Meditation* perhaps all their Life-Time to this very Day; though it be that Du-

ty,

ty, by which all other Duties are improved, and by which the Soul digeſteth Truths for its Nouriſhment and Comfort. It was God's Command to *Joſhua*, *This Book of the Law ſhall not depart out of thy Mouth, but thou ſhalt meditate therein Day and Night, that thou mayſt obſerve to do according to all that is written therein* (a). As Digeſtion turns Food into Chyle, and Blood, for vigorous Health; ſo *Meditation* turns the Truths received and remembered into warm Affection, firm Reſolution, and holy Converſation.

§ 4. *This Meditation is, the Acting of all the Powers of the Soul.* It is the Work of the Living, and not of the Dead. It is a Work of all others the moſt ſpiritual and ſublime, and therefore not to be well performed by a Heart that is merely carnal and earthly. They muſt neceſſarily have ſome Relation to Heaven, before they can familiarly converſe there. I ſuppoſe them to be ſuch as have a Title to Reſt, when I perſuade them to rejoice in the Meditations of Reſt. And ſuppoſing thee to be *a Chriſtian*, I am now exhorting thee to be *an active Chriſtian*. And it is the Work *of the Soul* I am ſetting thee to, for *bodily Exerciſe* doth here *profit* but *little*. And it muſt have *all the Powers* of the Soul, to diſtinguiſh it from the common Meditation of Students; for the Underſtanding is not the whole Soul, and therefore cannot do the whole Work. As in the Body, the Stomach muſt turn the Food into

(a) Joſh. i. 8.

Chyle, and prepare for the Liver; the Liver and Spleen turn it into Blood, and prepare for the Heart and Brain; ſo in the Soul, the Underſtanding muſt take in Truths, and prepare them for the Will, and that for the Affections. Chriſt and Heaven have various Excellencies, and therefore God hath formed the Soul with different Powers for apprehending thoſe Excellencies. What the better had we been for odoriferous Flowers, if we had no Smell? Or what Good would Language or Muſick have done us, if we could not hear? Or what Pleaſure ſhould we have found in Meats and Drinks, without the Senſe of Taſte? So, what Good could all the Glory of Heaven have done us, or what Pleaſure ſhould we have had in the Perfections of God Himſelf, if we had been without the Affections of Love and Joy? And what Strength or Sweetneſs canſt thou poſſibly receive by thy Meditations on Eternity, while thou doſt not exerciſe thoſe Affections of the Soul, by which thou muſt be ſenſible of the Sweetneſs and Strength? It is the Miſtake of Chriſtians, to think that Meditation is only the Work of the Underſtanding and Memory; when every School-Boy can do this, or Perſons that hate the Things which they think on. So that you ſee, there is more to be done, than barely to remember and think of Heaven; as ſome Labours not only ſtir a Hand, or a Foot, but exerciſe the whole Body, ſo doth Meditation the whole Soul. As the Affections of Sinners

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are ſet on the World, are turned to Idols, and fallen from God, as well as their Underſtanding; ſo muſt their Affections be reduced to God, as well as the Underſtanding; and as their whole Soul was filled with Sin before, ſo the whole muſt be filled with God now. See *David*'s Deſcription of the *bleſſed Man, His Delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in his Law doth he meditate Day and Night* (b).

§ 5. *This Meditation is ſet and ſolemn.* As there is *ſolemn Prayer*, when we ſet ourſelves wholly to that Duty; *ejaculatory Prayer*, when in the Midſt of other Buſineſs we ſend up ſome ſhort Requeſt to God; ſo alſo there is *ſolemn Meditation*, when we apply ourſelves wholly to that Work; and *tranſient Meditation*, when in the Midſt of other Buſineſs we have ſome good Thoughts of God in our Minds. And as ſolemn Prayer is, either, *ſet*, in a conſtant Courſe of Duty; or *occaſional*, at an extraordinary Seaſon; ſo alſo is Meditation. Now, though I would perſuade you to that Meditation, which is mixed with your common Labours, and alſo that which ſpecial Occaſions direct you to; yet I would have you likewiſe make it a conſtant ſtanding Duty, as you do by hearing, praying, and reading the Scriptures; and no more intermix other Matters with it, than you would with Prayer, or other ſtated Solemnities.

§ 6. *This Meditation is upon thy everlaſting Reſt.* I would not have you caſt off your other

(b) Pſalm i. 2.

Meditations; but ſurely, as Heaven hath the Preeminence in Perfection, it ſhould have it alſo in our Meditation. That which will make us moſt happy when we poſſeſs it, will make us moſt joyful when we meditate upon it. Other Meditations are as numerous, as there are Lines in the Scripture, or Creatures in the Univerſe, or particular Providences in the Government of the World. But this is a Walk to Mount *Sion*; from the Kingdoms of this World, to the Kingdom of Saints; from Earth, to Heaven; from Time, to Eternity; it is a walking upon Sun, Moon, and Stars, in the Garden and Paradiſe of God. It may ſeem far off; but Spirits are quick; whether in the Body, or out of the Body, their Motion is ſwift. You need not fear like the Men of the World, leſt theſe Thoughts ſhould make you mad. It is Heaven, and not Hell, that I perſuade you to walk in. It is Joy, and not Sorrow, that I perſuade you to exerciſe. I urge you to look on no deformed Objects, but only upon the raviſhing Glory of Saints, and the unſpeakable Excellencies of the God of Glory, and the Beams that ſtream from the Face of his Son. Will it diſtract a Man to think of his only Happineſs? Will it diſtract the Miſerable to think of Mercy, or the Priſoner to foreſee Deliverance, or the Poor to think of approaching Riches and Honour? Methinks it ſhould rather make a Man mad, to think of living in a World of Woe, and abiding in Poverty and Sickneſs, among the Rage of wicked Men;

Men; than to think of living with Chriſt in Bliſs. *But Wiſdom is juſtified of all her Children* (c). Knowledge hath no Enemy but the Ignorant. This heavenly Courſe was never ſpoke againſt by any, but thoſe that never knew it, or never uſed it. I fear more the Neglect of Men that approve it, than the Oppoſition or Arguments of any againſt it.

§ 7. (II) As to *the fitteſt Time* for this heavenly Contemplation, let me only adviſe, that it be,——*ſtated*,——*frequent*,——and *ſeaſonable*.

§ 8. (1) *Give it a ſtated Time.* If thou ſuit thy Time to the Advantage of the Work, without placing any Religion in the Time itſelf, thou haſt no need to fear Superſtition. Stated Time is a Hedge to Duty, and defends it againſt many Temptations to Omiſſion. Some have not their Time at Command, and therefore cannot ſet their Hours; and many are ſo poor, that the Neceſſities of their Families deny them this Freedom. Such Perſons ſhould be watchful to redeem Time as much as they can, and take their vacant Opportunities as they fall, and eſpecially join Meditation and Prayer, as much as they can, with the Labours of their Callings. Yet thoſe that have more Time to ſpare from their worldly Neceſſities, and are Maſters of their Time, I ſtill adviſe, to keep this Duty to a ſtated Time. And indeed, if every Work of the Day had its appointed Time,

(c) Luke viii. 35.

we ſhould be better skilled, both in redeeming Time, and in performing Duty.

§ 9. (2) *Let it be frequent*, as well as ſtated. How oft it ſhould be, I cannot determine, becauſe Men's Circumſtances differ. But, in general, Scripture requires it to be frequent, when it mentions, *meditating Day and Night*. For thoſe, therefore, who can conveniently omit other Buſineſs, I adviſe, that it be once a Day at leaſt. Frequency in heavenly Contemplation is particularly important,

§ 10.——*To prevent a Shyneſs between God and thy Soul.* Frequent Society breeds Familiarity, and Familiarity increaſes Love and Delight, and makes us bold in our Addreſſes. The chief End of this Duty is, to have Acquaintance and Fellowſhip with God, and therefore if thou come but ſeldom to it, thou wilt keep thyſelf a Stranger ſtill. When a Man feels his Need of God, and muſt ſeek his Help in a Time of Neceſſity, then it is great Encouragement to go to a God we know, and are acquainted with. "O!" ſaith the heavenly Chriſtian, "I know both "whither I go, and to whom. I have gone this "Way many a Time before now. It is the ſame "God that I daily converſe with, and the Way "has been my daily Walk. God knows me well "enough, and I have ſome Knowledge of him." On the other Side, what a Horror and Diſcouragement will it be to the Soul, when it is forced to fly to God in Straits, to think, "Alas! "I know not whither to go. I never went the

"Way

" Way before. I have no Acquaintance at the " Court of Heaven. My Soul knows not that " God that I muſt ſpeak to, and I fear he will " not know my Soul." But eſpecially when we come to die, and muſt immediately appear before this God, and expect to enter into his eternal Reſt, then the Difference will plainly appear; then what a Joy will it be to think, " I am going to the Place that I daily conver- " ſed in; to the Place from whence I taſted ſuch " frequent Delights; to that God whom I have " met in my Meditation ſo often. My Heart hath " been at Heaven before now, and hath often " taſted its reviving Sweetneſs; and if my Eyes " were ſo enlightened, and my Spirits ſo re- " freſhed, when I had but a Taſte, what will it " be when I ſhall feed on it freely?" On the contrary, what a Terror will it be to think, " I " muſt die, and go I know not whither; from " a Place where I am acquainted, to a Place " where I have no Familiarity or Knowledge!" It is inexpreſſible Horror to a dying Man, to have ſtrange Thoughts of God and Heaven. I am perſuaded the Neglect of this Duty ſo commonly makes Death, even to godly Men, unwelcome and uncomfortable. Therefore I perſuade to Frequency in this Duty. And as it will prevent Shyneſs between thee and God, ſo alſo,

§ 11.——*It will prevent Unſkilfulneſs in the Duty itſelf.* How aukwardly do Men ſet their Hands to a Work they are ſeldom employed in?

in? Whereas Frequency will habituate thy Heart to the Work, and make it more eaſy and delightful. The Hill which made thee pant and blow at firſt going up, thou mayſt eaſily run up, when thou art once accuſtomed to it.

§ 12.——*Thou wilt alſo prevent the Loſs of that Heat and Life thou haſt obtained.* If thou eat but once in two or three Days, thou wilt loſe thy Strength as faſt as it comes. If in holy Meditation thou get near to Chriſt, and warm thy Heart with the Fire of Love, and then come but ſeldom, thy former Coldneſs will ſoon return; eſpecially as the Work is ſo ſpiritual, and againſt the Bent of depraved Nature. It is true, the intermixing of other Duties, eſpecially *ſecret Prayer*, may do much to the keeping thy Heart above; but *Meditation is the Life of moſt other Duties*, and *the View of Heaven is the Life of Meditation.*

§ 13. (3) *Chuſe alſo the moſt ſeaſonable Time.* All Things are beautiful and excellent in their Seaſon. Unſeaſonableneſs may loſe the Fruit of thy Labour, may raiſe Difficulties in the Work, and may turn a Duty to a Sin. The ſame Hour may be ſeaſonable to one, and unſeaſonable to another. *Servants* and *Labourers* muſt take that Seaſon, which their Buſineſs will beſt afford; either while at Work, or in Travelling, or when they lie awake in the Night. *Such as can chuſe what Time of the Day they will*, ſhould obſerve, when they find their Spirits moſt active and fit for Contemplation, and fix upon that as the

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ſtated Time. *I have always found that the fitteſt Time for myſelf is, the Evening, from Sun-ſetting to the Twilight.* I the rather mention this, becauſe it was the Experience of a better and wiſer Man; for it is expreſsly ſaid, *Iſaac went out to meditate in the Field at the Even-tide* (d).——*The Lord's Day* is exceeding ſeaſonable for this Exerciſe. When ſhould we more ſeaſonably contemplate our Reſt, than on that Day of Reſt, which typifies it to us? It being a Day appropriated to *ſpiritual Duties*, methinks we ſhould never exclude this Duty, which is ſo eminently ſpiritual. I verily think this is the chief Work of a *Chriſtian Sabbath*, and moſt agreeable to the Deſign of it's *poſitive Inſtitution*. What fitter Time to converſe with our *Lord*, than on the *Lord's Day?* What fitter Day to aſcend to Heaven, than that on which He aroſe from Earth, and fully triumphed over Death and Hell. The fitteſt Temper for a true Chriſtian, is, like *John*, to *be in the Spirit on the Lord's Day* (e). And what can bring us to this Joy in the Spirit, but the ſpiritual beholding of our approaching Glory? Take Notice of this, *you that ſpend the Lord's Day only in publick Worſhip*; your allowing no Time to *private Duty*, and therefore neglecting this ſpiritual Duty of *Meditation*, is very hurtful to your Souls. *You alſo that have Time on the Lord's Day for Idleneſs, and vain Diſcourſe*, were you but acquainted with this Duty of *Contemplation*, you would need

(d) Gen. xxiv. 63. (e) Rev. i. 10.

need no other Paſtime; you would think the longeſt Day ſhort enough, and be ſorry that the Night had ſhortened your Pleaſure. *Chriſtians*, let Heaven have more Share in your Sabbaths, where you muſt ſhortly keep your everlaſting Sabbath. Uſe your Sabbaths as Steps to Glory, till you have paſſed them all, and are there arrived. Eſpecially you that are poor, and cannot take Time in the Week as you deſire, ſee that you well improve this Day; as your Bodies reſt from their Labours, let your Spirits ſeek after Reſt from God.

§ 14. Besides the conſtant Seaſonableneſs of *every Day*, and *particularly every Lord's Day*, there are alſo *more peculiar Seaſons for heavenly Contemplation*. As for Inſtance,

§ 15.——*When God hath more abundantly warmed thy Spirit with Fire from above*. Then thou mayſt ſoar with greater Freedom. A little Labour will ſet thy Heart a going at ſuch a Time as this; whereas at another Time thou mayſt take Pains to little Purpoſe. Obſerve the Gales of the Spirit, and how the Spirit of Chriſt doth move thy Spirit. *Without Chriſt we can do nothing*; and therefore let us be doing while He is doing; and be ſure not to be out of the Way, nor aſleep, when He comes. When the Spirit finds thy Heart, like *Peter*, in Priſon, and in Irons, and ſmites thee, and ſays, *Ariſe up quickly, and follow me*; be ſure thou then ariſe, and follow, and thou ſhalt find thy *Chains fall off*, and all *Doors will open*, and thou wilt be at Heaven before thou art aware. § 16.

§ 16.——*Another peculiar Seaſon for this Duty, is, when thou art in a ſuffering, diſtreſſed, or tempted State.* When ſhould we take our Cordials, but in Times of Fainting? When is it more ſeaſonable to walk to Heaven, than when we know not in what Corner of Earth to live with Comfort? Or when ſhould our Thoughts converſe more above, than when they have nothing but Grief below? Where ſhould *Noah*'s Dove be but in the Ark, when the Waters cover all the Earth, and ſhe cannot find Reſt for the Sole of her Foot? What ſhould we think on, but our *Father's Houſe*, when we have not even the Huſks of the World to feed upon? Surely God ſends thy Afflictions to this very Purpoſe. Happy art thou, *poor Man*, if thou make this Uſe of thy Poverty! and *thou that art ſick*, if thou ſo improve thy Sickneſs! It is ſeaſonable to go to the promiſed Land, when our Burthens are increaſed in *Egypt*, and our Straits in the Wilderneſs. *Reader*, if thou kneweſt what a Cordial to thy Griefs the ſerious Views of Glory are, thou wouldſt leſs fear theſe harmleſs Troubles, and more uſe that preſerving reviving Remedy. *In the Multitude of my* troubled *Thoughts within me*, ſaith *David*, *thy Comforts delight my Soul* (f). *I reckon*, ſaith *Paul*, *that the Sufferings of this preſent Time, are not worthy to be compared with the Glory which ſhall be revealed in us* (g). *For which Cauſe we faint not, but though our outward Man*

(f) Pſalm xciv. 19 (g) Rom. viii. 18.

Man periſh, yet the inward Man is renewed Day by Day. For our light Affliction, which is but for a Moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory; while we look not at the Things which are ſeen, but at the Things which are not ſeen; for the Things which are ſeen, are temporal; but the Things which are not ſeen, are eternal (h).

§ 17.——*And another Seaſon peculiarly fit for this heavenly Duty, is, when the Meſſengers of God ſummon us to die.* When ſhould we moſt frequently ſweeten our Souls, with the believing Thoughts of another Life, than when we find that this is almoſt ended? No Men have greater Need of ſupporting Joys, than dying Men; and thoſe Joys muſt be fetched from our eternal Joy. As heavenly Delights are ſweeteſt, when nothing earthly is joined with them; ſo the Delights of dying Chriſtians are oftentimes the ſweeteſt they ever had. What a prophetical Bleſſing had dying *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, for their Sons? With what a heavenly Song, and divine Benediction, did *Moſes* conclude his Life? What heavenly Advice and Prayer had the Diſciples from their Lord, when He was about to leave them? When *Paul* was *ready to be offered up*, what heavenly Exhortations and Advice did he give the *Philippians*, *Timothy*, and the *Elders* of *Epheſus*? How near to Heaven was *John* in *Patmos*, but a little before his Tranſlation thither? It is the general Temper of

(h) 2 Cor. iv. 16—18.

of the Saints, to be then moſt heavenly, when they are neareſt to Heaven. If it be thy Caſe, *Reader*, to perceive thy dying Time draw on, O where ſhould thy Heart now be, but with Chriſt! Methinks thou ſhouldſt even behold Him ſtanding by thee, and ſhouldſt beſpeak Him as thy Father, thy Huſband, thy Phyſician, thy Friend. Methinks thou ſhouldſt, as it were, ſee the Angels about thee, waiting to perform their laſt Office to thy Soul; even thoſe Angels, which diſdained not to *carry into Abraham's Boſom* the Soul of *Lazarus*, nor will think much to conduct thee thither. Look upon thy Pain and Sickneſs, as *Jacob* did on *Joſeph*'s Chariots, and let thy *Spirit revive* within thee, and ſay, "*It is enough, Chriſt is yet a-*"*live; becauſe He lives, I ſhall live alſo* (i)." Doſt thou need the choiceſt Cordials? Here are choicer than the World can afford; here are all the Joys of Heaven, even the Viſion of God, and Chriſt, and whatſoever the bleſſed there poſſeſs; theſe Dainties are offered thee by the Hand of Chriſt; He hath written the Receipt in the Promiſes of the Goſpel; He hath prepared the Ingredients in Heaven; only put forth the Hand of Faith, and feed upon them, and rejoice, and live. The Lord ſaith to thee, as to *Elijah*, *Ariſe, and eat, becauſe the Journey is too great for thee.* Though it be not long, yet the Way is miry; therefore obey his Voice, ariſe and eat, *and in the Strength of that Meat* thou mayſt

(i) John xiv. 19.

mayſt *go to the Mount of God*; and, like *Moſes*, *die in the Mount, whither thou goeſt up*; and ſay, as *Simeon*, *Lord, now letteſt thou thy Servant depart in Peace*; *for my Eye* of Faith *hath ſeen thy Salvation* (k).

§ 18. (III) *Concerning the fitteſt Place for heavenly Contemplation, it is ſufficient to ſay, that the moſt convenient is ſome private Retirement.* Our Spirits need every Help, and to be freed from every Hindrance in the Work. If in *private Prayer*, Chriſt directs us to *enter into our Cloſet, and ſhut the Door*, that *our Father may ſee us in Secret* (l), ſo ſhould we do in this Meditation. How often did Chriſt himſelf retire to ſome Mountain, or Wilderneſs, or other ſolitary Place? I give not this Advice for *occaſional Meditation*, but for that which is *ſet and ſolemn*. Therefore withdraw thyſelf from all Society, even the Society of godly Men, that thou mayſt a while enjoy the Society of thy Lord. If a Student cannot ſtudy in a Croud, who exerciſeth only his Invention and Memory; much leſs ſhouldſt thou be in a Croud, who art to exerciſe all the Powers of thy Soul, and upon an Object ſo far above Nature. We are fled ſo far from *ſuperſtitious Solitude*, that we have even caſt off the *Solitude of contemplative Devotion*. We ſeldom read of God's appearing by Himſelf, or by his Angels, to any of his Prophets or Saints in a Croud; but frequently when they were alone.——But obſerve for thyſelf,

(k) Luke ii. 29, 30. (l) Mat. vi. 6.

ſelf, what Place beſt agrees with thy Spirit; whither whithin Doors, or without. *Iſaac*'s Example, in *going out to meditate in the Field*, will, I believe, beſt ſuit with moſt. Our Lord ſo much uſed a ſolitary Garden, that even *Judas*, when he came to betray Him, *knew* where to find him: And though he took his Diſciples thither with Him, yet *he was withdrawn from them* for more ſecret Devotions (m): And tho' his Meditation be not directly named, but only his praying, yet it is very clearly implied; for *his Soul is* firſt made *ſorrowful* with the bitter Meditations on his Sufferings and Death, and then He poureth it out in Prayer (n). So that Chriſt had his accuſtomed Place, and conſequently accuſtomed Duty, and ſo muſt we; He hath a Place that is ſolitary, whither He retireth Himſelf, even from his own Diſciples, and ſo muſt we; His Meditations go further than his Thoughts, they affect and pierce his Heart and Soul, and ſo muſt ours. Only there is a wide Difference in the Object; Chriſt meditates on the Sufferings that our Sins had deſerved, ſo that the Wrath of his Father paſſed through all his Soul: But we are to meditate on the Glory He hath purchaſed, that the Love of the Father, and the Joy of the Spirit, may enter at our Thoughts, and revive our Affections, and overflow our Souls.

§ 19. (IV.) *I am next to adviſe thee concerning the Preparations of thy Heart for this hea-*

(m) John xviii. 1, 2. Luke xxii. 41. (n) Mark xiv. 35.

venly Contemplation. The Succeſs of the Work much depends on the Frame of thy Heart. When Man's Heart had nothing in it to grieve the Spirit, it was then the delightful Habitation of his Maker. God did not quit his Reſidence there, till Man expell'd Him by unworthy Provocations. There was no Shyneſs or Reſerve, till the Heart grew ſinful, and too loathſome a Dungeon for God to delight in. And was this Soul reduced to its former Innocency, God would quickly return to his former Habitation; yea, ſo far as it is renewed and repaired by the Spirit, and purged from its Luſts, and beautified with his Image, the Lord will yet acknowledge it as his own; Chriſt will manifeſt himſelf unto it, and the Spirit will take it for his Temple and Reſidence. So far as the Heart is qualified for converſing with God, ſo far it uſually enjoys Him. Therefore, *with all Diligence keep thy Heart, for out of it are the Iſſues of Life* (o). More particularly,

§ 20. (1) *Get thy Heart as clear from the World as thou canſt.* Wholly lay by the Thoughts of thy Buſineſs, Troubles, Enjoyments, and every Thing that may take up any Room in thy Soul. Get it as empty as thou poſſibly canſt, that it may be the more capable of being filled with God. If thou couldſt perform ſome *outward Duty* with a Piece of thy Heart, while the other is abſent, yet this Duty above all I am ſure thou canſt not. When thou ſhalt go into the

(o) Prov. iv. 23.

the *Mount of Contemplation*, thou wilt be like the covetous Man at the Heap of Gold, who, when he might take as much as he could, lamented that he was able to carry no more; ſo thou wilt find as much of God and Glory, as thy narrow Heart is able to contain, and almoſt nothing to hinder thy full Poſſeſſion, but the Incapacity of thy own Spirit. Then thou wilt think, "O that this Underſtanding, and "theſe Affections could contain more! It is "more my Unfitneſs than any Thing elſe, "that even this Place is not my Heaven. *God "is in this Place, and I know it not.* This "*Mount is full of Chariots of Fire*, but mine "Eyes are ſhut, and I cannot ſee them. O the "Words of Love Chriſt hath to ſpeak, and "Wonders of Love he hath to ſhew, but I "cannot bear them yet! Heaven is ready for "me, but my Heart is unready for Heaven." Therefore, *Reader*, ſeeing thy Enjoyment of God in this Contemplation much depends on the Capacity and Diſpoſition of thy Heart, ſeek Him here, if ever, with all thy Soul. Thruſt not Chriſt into *the Stable, and the Manger*, as if thou hadſt better Gueſts for the chief Rooms. Say to all thy worldly Buſineſs and Thoughts, as Chriſt to his Diſciples, *Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.* Or as *Abraham* to his Servants, when he went to offer *Iſaac*, *Abide ye here, and I will go yonder and worſhip, and come again to you.* Even as *the Prieſts thruſt King Uzziah out of the Temple*, where he preſumed

to burn Incenſe, when they ſaw *the Leproſy* upon him; ſo do thou thruſt thoſe Thoughts from the Temple of thy Heart, which have the Badge of God's Prohibition upon them.

§ 21. (2) *Be ſure to ſet upon this Work with the greateſt Solemnity of Heart and Mind.* There is no trifling in holy Things. *God will be ſanctified in them that come nigh Him* (p). Theſe ſpiritual, excellent, Soul-raiſing Duties, are, if well uſed, moſt profitable; but when uſed unfaithfully, moſt dangerous. Labour therefore to have the deepeſt Apprehenſions of the Preſence of God, and his incomprehenſible Greatneſs. If Queen *Eſther* muſt not draw near, till *the King hold out the Sceptre*; think, then, with what Reverence thou ſhouldſt approach Him, who made the Worlds with the Word of his Mouth, who upholds the Earth as in the Palm of his Hand, who keeps the Sun, Moon, and Stars in their Courſes, who ſets Bounds to the raging Sea. Thou art going to converſe with Him, before whom the Earth will quake, and Devils do tremble, and at whoſe Bar thou and all the World muſt ſhortly ſtand, and be finally judged. O think, "I ſhall then have live-
"ly Apprehenſions of his Majeſty. My drowſy
"Spirits will then be awakened, and my Irre-
"verence be laid aſide; and why ſhould I not
"now be rouſed with the Senſe of his Great-
"neſs, and the Dread of his Name poſſeſs my
"Soul?" Labour alſo to apprehend the Great-

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(p) Lev. x. 3.

neſs of the Work which thou attempteſt, and to be deeply ſenſible both of its Importance and Excellency. If thou waſt pleading for thy Life at the Bar of an earthly Judge, thou wouldſt be ſerious; and yet that would be a Trifle to this. If thou waſt engaged in ſuch a Work as *David* againſt *Goliah*, on which the Welfare of a Kingdom depended; in itſelf conſidered, it were nothing to this. Suppoſe thou waſt going to ſuch a *Wreſtling* as *Jacob*'s, or to ſee the Sight which the *three Diſciples ſaw in the Mount*; how ſeriouſly, how reverently, wouldſt thou both approach and behold! If but an Angel from Heaven ſhould appoint to meet thee, at the ſame Time and Place of thy Contemplations; with what Dread wouldſt thou be filled? Conſider then, with what a Spirit thou ſhouldſt meet the Lord, and with what Seriouſneſs and Awe thou ſhouldſt daily converſe with Him. Conſider alſo the bleſſed Iſſue of the Work, if it ſucceed; it will be thy Admiſſion into the Preſence of God, and the Beginning of thy eternal Glory on Earth; a Means to make thee live above the Rate of other Men, and fix thee in the next Room to the Angels themſelves, that thou mayſt both live and die joyfully. The Prize being ſo great, thy Preparations ſhould be anſwerable. There is none on Earth live ſuch a Life of Joy and Bleſſedneſs, as thoſe that are acquainted with this *heavenly Converſation*.

ſation. The Joys of all other Men are but like a Child's Play, a Fool's Laughter, or a ſick Man's Dream of Health. He that trades for Heaven is the only Gainer, and he that neglects it is the only Loſer. How ſeriouſly, therefore ſhould this Work be done?

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

What Uſe heavenly Contemplation makes of Conſideration, Affections, Soliloquy, and Prayer.

§ 1. *The Reader is invited to engage in heavenly Contemplation*; § 2. *and to that End is* (I) *directed in the Uſe of Conſideration,* § 3—8. *the great Influence of which over the Heart is repreſented in ſeveral Inſtances:* § 9. *Then* (II) *it is ſhewn how heavenly Contemplation is promoted by the Affections*; *particularly,* § 10—12. (1) *by Love,* § 13. (2) *Deſire,* § 14. (3) *Hope,* § 15. (4) *Courage or Boldneſs, and* § 16—18. (5) *Joy.* § 19. *A Caution is added concerning this Exerciſe of the Affections.* § 20—22. (III) *The Chapter concludes with ſome Account of the Uſefulneſs of Soliloquy, and Prayer, in heavenly Contemplation.*

§ 1. HAVING ſet thy Heart in Tune, we now come to the Muſick itſelf. Having got an Appetite, now approach to the Feaſt and delight thy Soul, *as with Marrow and Fatneſs. Come, for all Things are now ready.*

dy. Heaven, and Chriſt, and *the exceeding Weight of Glory*, are before you. Do not *make light* of this Invitation, nor *begin to make Excuſes*; whatever thou art, rich or poor, tho' in Alms-houſes and Hoſpitals, tho' in *Highways and Hedges*, my Commiſſion is, if poſſible, to *compel you to come in*; and *bleſſed is he that ſhall eat Bread in the Kingdom of God!* The *Manna* lieth about your Tents; walk out, gather it up, take it home, and feed upon it. In order to this, I am only to direct you——*how to uſe your Conſideration*,—— and *Affections*,—— *your Soliloquy*,——*and Prayer*.

§ 2. (1) *Conſideration is the great Inſtrument by which this heavenly Work is carried on*. This muſt be voluntary, and not forced. Some Men conſider unwillingly; ſo God will make the Wicked *conſider* their Sins, when He ſhall *ſet them in Order before their Eyes* (a); ſo ſhall the Damned conſider of the Excellency of Chriſt, whom they once deſpiſed, and of the eternal Joys which they have fooliſhly loſt. Great is the Power which Conſideration hath for moving the Affections, and impreſſing Things on the Heart; as will appear by the following Particulars.

§ 3. (1) *Conſideration, as it were, opens the Door between the Head and the Heart*. The Underſtanding, having received Truths, lays them up in the Memory, and Conſideration conveys them from thence to the Affections. What Excellency would there be in much Learning and Know-

(a) Pſalm l. 21, 22.

Knowledge, if the Obſtructions between the Head and the Heart were but opened, and the Affections did but correſpond to the Underſtanding? He is uſually the beſt Scholar, whoſe Apprehenſion is quick, clear, and tenacious; but he is uſually the beſt Chriſtian, whoſe Apprehenſion is the deepeſt, and moſt affectionate, and who has the readieſt Paſſages, not ſo much from the Ear to the Brain, as from that to the Heart. And though the Spirit be the principal Cauſe; yet, on our Part, this Paſſage muſt be opened by Conſideration.

§ 4. (2) *Conſideration preſents to the Affections thoſe Things which are moſt important.* The moſt delightful Object does not entertain where it is not ſeen, nor the moſt joyful News affect him that does not hear it; but Conſideration preſents to our View thoſe Things which were as abſent, and brings them to the Eye and Ear of the Soul. Are not Chriſt and Glory affecting Objects? Would they not work Wonders upon the Soul, if they were but clearly diſcovered, and our Apprehenſions of them were in ſome Meaſure anſwerable to their Worth? It is Conſideration that preſents them to us: This is the Chriſtian's Perſpective, by which he can ſee from Earth to Heaven.

§ 5. (3) *Conſideration alſo preſents the moſt important Things in the moſt affecting Way.* Conſideration reaſons the Caſe with a Man's own Heart. When a Believer would reaſon his Heart to heavenly Contemplation, how ma-

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ny Arguments offer themſelves from God and Chriſt, from each of the divine Perfections, from our former and preſent State, from Promiſes, from preſent Sufferings and Enjoyments, from Hell and Heaven? Every Thing offers itſelf to promote our Joy, and Conſideration is the Hand to draw them all out; it adds one Reaſon to another, till the Scales turn: This it does, when perſuading to Joy, till it hath ſilenced all your Diſtruſt and Sorrows, and your Cauſe for rejoicing lies plain before you. If another's Reaſoning is powerful with us, though we are not certain whether he intends to inform, or deceive us; how much more ſhould our own Reaſoning prevail with us, when we are ſo well acquainted with our own Intentions? Nay, how much more ſhould God's Reaſoning work upon us, which we are ſure cannot deceive, or be deceived? Now Conſideration is but the reading over, and repeating God's Reaſons to our Hearts. As the *Prodigal* had many and ſtrong Reaſons to plead with himſelf, why he ſhould return to his *Father's Houſe*; ſo have we to plead with our Affections, to perſuade them to our Father's everlaſting Manſions.

§ 6. (4) *Conſideration exalts Reaſon to its juſt Authority.* It helps to deliver it from its Captivity to the Senſes, and ſets it again on the Throne of the Soul. When Reaſon is ſilent, it is uſually ſubject; for when it is aſleep, the Senſes domineer. But Conſideration awakens our Reaſon,

Reaſon, till, like *Sampſon*, it rouſes up itſelf, and breaks the Bonds of Senſuality, and bears down the Deluſions of the Fleſh. What Strength can the Lion exert while aſleep? What is a King when depoſed from his Throne, more than another Man? Spiritual Reaſon excited by Meditation, and not Fancy or fleſhly Senſe, muſt judge of heavenly Joys. Conſideration exalts the Objects of Faith, and comparatively diſgraces the Objects of Senſe. The moſt inconſiderate Men are the moſt ſenſual. It is too eaſy and common to ſin againſt Knowledge; but againſt ſober, ſtrong, perſevering Conſideration, Men ſeldom offend.

§ 7. (5) *Conſideration makes Reaſon ſtrong and active.* Before, it was as a ſtanding Water, but now as a Stream, which violently bears down all before it. Before, it was as the Stones in the Brook, but now like that out of *David*'s Sling, which ſmites the *Goliah* of our Unbelief in the Forehead. As wicked Men continue wicked, becauſe they bring not Reaſon into Act and Exerciſe; ſo godly Men are uncomfortable, becauſe they let their Reaſon and Faith lie aſleep, and don't ſtir them up to Action by this Work of Meditation. What Fears, Sorrows, and Joys, will our very Dreams excite? how much more then would ſerious Meditation affect us?

§ 8. (6) *Conſideration can continue and perſevere in this rational Employment.* Meditation holds Reaſon and Faith to their Work, and blows the Fire till it thoroughly burns. To run

run a few Steps will not get a Man Heat, but walking an Hour may; and tho' a ſudden occaſional Thought of Heaven will not raiſe our Affections to any ſpiritual Heat, yet Meditation can continue our Thoughts till our Hearts grow warm.——Thus you ſee the powerful Tendency of Conſideration to produce this great Elevation of the Soul in heavenly Contemplation.

§ 9. (II) *Let us next ſee how this heavenly Work is promoted by the particular Exerciſe of the Affections.* It is by *Conſideration* that we firſt have Recourſe to the *Memory*, and from thence take thoſe *heavenly Doctrines*, which we intend to make the Subject of our *Meditation*; ſuch as, Promiſes of eternal Life, Deſcriptions of the Saints Glory, the Reſurrection, *&c. &c. &c.* ——We then preſent them to our *Judgment*, that it may deliberately view them over, and take an exact Survey, and determine uprightly concerning the Perfection of our celeſtial Happineſs, againſt all the Dictates of Fleſh and Senſe, and ſo as to magnify the Lord in our Hearts, till we are filled with a *holy Admiration*.—— But the principal Thing is to exerciſe, not merely our Judgment, but our *Faith* in the Truth of our everlaſting Reſt; by which I mean, both the Truth of the Promiſes, and of our own perſonal Intereſt in them, and Title to them. If we did really and firmly believe, *that there is ſuch a Glory*, and *that within a few Days our Eyes ſhall behold it*, O what Paſſions would it raiſe within us! What aſtoniſhing Apprehenſi-

ons

ons of that Life would it produce! What Love, what Longings, would it excite within us! O how it would actuate every Affection! How it would tranſport us with Joy, upon the leaſt Aſſurance of our Title! Never expect to have Love and Joy move, when Faith ſtands ſtill, which muſt lead the Way. Therefore daily exerciſe Faith, and ſet before it the Freeneſs of the Promiſe, God's urging all to accept it, Chriſt's gracious Diſpoſition, all the Evidences of the Love of Chriſt, his Faithfulneſs to his Engagements, and the Evidences of his Love in ourſelves; lay all theſe together, and think, whether they do not teſtify the good Will of the Lord concerning our Salvation, and may not properly be pleaded againſt our Unbelief.——Thus when the Judgment hath determined, and Faith hath apprehended, the Truth of our Happineſs, then may *our Meditation proceed to raiſe our Affections*, and particularly,——*Love*,——*Deſire*,——*Hope*,——*Courage* or *Boldneſs*,——and *Joy*.

§ 10. (1) *Love is the firſt Affection to be excited in heavenly Contemplation.* The Object of it is Goodneſs. Here, *Chriſtian*, is the Soul-reviving Part of thy Work. Go to thy *Memory*, thy *Judgment*, and thy *Faith*, and from them produce the Excellencies of thy Reſt; preſent theſe to thy Affection of Love, and thou wilt find thyſelf, as it were, in another World. Speak out, and Love can hear. Do but reveal theſe Things, and Love can ſee. It is the bruiſh Love of the World that is blind; divine

Love

Love is exceeding quick-ſighted. Let thy Faith take hold of thy Heart, and ſhew it the ſumptuous Buildings of thy eternal Habitation, and the glorious Ornaments of thy Father's Houſe, even the Manſions Chriſt is preparing, and the Honours of his Kingdom; let thy Faith lead thy Heart into the Preſence of God, and as near as thou poſſibly canſt, and ſay to it, " Behold " the Antient of Days, the Lord Jehovah, " whoſe Name is, I AM: This is He, who " made all Worlds with his Word, who up- " holds the Earth, who rules the Nations, who " diſpoſes of all Events, who ſubdues his Foes, " who controuls the ſwelling Waves of the Sea, " who governs the Winds, and cauſes the Sun " to run its Race, and the Stars to know their " Courſes: This is He, who loved thee from " everlaſting, formed thee in the Womb, gave " thee this Soul, brought thee forth, ſhewed " thee the Light, and ranked thee with the " chief of his earthly Creatures, who endued " thee with thy Underſtanding, and beautified " thee with his Gifts, who maintains thy Life " and all its Comforts, and diſtinguiſhes thee " from the moſt miſerable and vileſt of Men. " O here is an Object worthy thy Love! Here " ſhouldſt thou even pour out thy Soul in " Love! Here it is impoſſible for thee to love " too much! This is the Lord, who hath bleſſed " thee with his Benefits, *ſpread thy Table in the* " *Sight of thine Enemies, and made thy Cup over-* " *flow!* This is He whom Angels and Saints

" praiſe,

" praiſe, and the heavenly Hoſt for ever mag-
" nify!" Thus do thou expatiate on the Praiſes of God, and open his Excellencies to thine Heart, till the holy Fire of Love begins to kindle in thy Breaſt.

§ 11. If thou feeleſt thy *Love* not yet burn, lead thy Heart farther, and ſhew it the Son of the Living God, whoſe Name is, *Wonderful, Counſellor, the mighty God, the everlaſting Father, the Prince of Peace*; ſhew it the King of Saints on the Throne of his Glory, *the Firſt and the Laſt; who is, and was, and is to come; who liveth, and was dead, and behold, He lives forevermore; who hath made thy Peace, by the Blood of his Croſs*, and hath prepared thee with Himſelf an Habitation of Peace; His Office is the great Peace-Maker; His Kingdom is the Kingdom of Peace; His Goſpel is the Tidings of Peace; His Voice to thee now, is the Voice of Peace: Draw near, and behold Him. Doſt thou not hear his Voice? He that bid *Thomas* come near, and ſee the Print of the Nails, and put his Finger into his Wounds; He it is that calls to thee, " Come near, and view the Lord " thy Saviour, *and be not faithleſs, but believing*; " *Peace be unto thee, fear not, it is I.*" Look well upon him. Doſt thou not know him? It is He that brought thee up from the Pit of Hell, reverſed the Sentence of thy Damnation, bore the Curſe which thou ſhouldſt have borne, reſtored thee to the Bleſſing thou hadſt forfeited, and purchaſed the Advancement which thou muſt inherit

inherit for ever. And doſt thou not yet know Him? His Hands were pierced, his Head, his Side, his Heart were pierced, that by theſe Marks thou mighteſt always know Him. Doſt thou not remember when He *found thee lying in thy Blood, and took Pity on thee, and dreſſed thy Wounds, and brought thee* Home, *and ſaid unto thee, Live?* Haſt thou forgotten ſince He wounded Himſelf to cure thy Wounds, and let out his own Blood to ſtop thy Bleeding? If thou knoweſt Him not by the Face, the Voice, the Hands, thou mayſt know Him by the Heart; that Soul-pitying Heart is his; it can be none but his; Love and Compaſſion are its certain Signatures: This is He, who choſe thy Life before his own; who pleads his Blood before his Father, and makes continual Interceſſion for thee. If He had not ſuffered, what hadſt thou ſuffered? There was but a Step between thee and Hell, when He ſtepp'd in and bore the Stroke. And is not here Fuel enough for thy Love to feed on? Doth not thy throbbing Heart ſtop here to eaſe itſelf, and, like *Joſeph, ſeek for a Place to weep in?* Or do not the Tears of thy Love bedew theſe Lines? Go on then, for the Field of Love is large; it will be thy eternal Work to behold and love; nor needeſt thou want Work for thy preſent Meditation.

§ 12. How often hath thy Lord found thee, like *Hagar*, ſitting, and weeping, and giving up thy Soul for loſt, and he opened to thee a Well of Conſolation, and alſo opened thine Eyes to ſee it?

it? How often, in the Poſture of *Elijah*, deſiring to die out of thy Miſery, and he hath ſpread thee a Table of unexpected Relief, and ſent thee on his Work refreſhed and encouraged? How often, in the Caſe of the Prophet's Servant, crying out, *Alas! what ſhall we do, for an Hoſt doth encompaſs us*; and he hath *opened thine Eyes to ſee more for thee, than againſt thee?* How often, like *Jonah*, peeviſh, and weary of thy Life, and he hath mildly ſaid, *doſt thou well to be angry* with me, or murmur againſt me? How often hath he ſet thee on *watching and praying*, repenting and believing, *and when he hath returned, hath found thee aſleep*, and yet hath covered thy Neglect with a Mantle of Love, and gently pleaded for thee, that *the Spirit is willing, but the Fleſh is weak?* Can thy Heart be cold, when thou thinkeſt of this? Can it contain, when thou remembereſt thoſe boundleſs Compaſſions? Thus, *Reader*, hold forth the Goodneſs of Chriſt to thy Heart; plead thus with thy frozen Soul, till, with *David*, thou canſt ſay, *my Heart was hot within me, while I was muſing, the Fire burned.* If this will not rouſe up thy *Love*, thou haſt all Chriſt's perſonal Excellencies to add, all his particular Mercies to thyſelf, all his ſweet and near Relations to thee, and the Happineſs of thy everlaſting Abode with Him. Only follow them cloſe to thy Heart. Deal with it, as Chriſt did with *Peter*, when he thrice asked him, *Loveſt thou me?* till he was *grieved*, and

anſwers, *Lord, thou knoweſt that I love thee:* So grieve and ſhame thy Heart out of its Stupidity, till thou canſt truly ſay, " I know that my " Lord knows, that I *love* Him."

§ 13. (2) *The next Affection to be exerciſed in heavenly Contemplation, is Deſire.* The Object of it is Goodneſs conſidered as abſent, or not yet attained. If Love be hot, Deſire will not be cold. Think with thyſelf, " What have I " ſeen? O the incomprehenſible Glory! O the " tranſcendent Beauty! O bleſſed Souls that " now enjoy it! who ſee a thouſand Times " more clearly, what I have ſeen at a Diſtance, " and through dark interpoſing Clouds. What " a Difference between my State and theirs! I " am ſighing, and they are ſinging. I am of- " fending, and they are pleaſing God. I am a " Spectacle of Pity, like a *Job*, or a *Lazarus*, " but they are perfect, and without Blemiſh. I " am here entangled in the Love of the World, " while they are ſwallowed up in the Love of " God. They have none of my Cares and " Fears; they weep not in ſecret; they lan- " guiſh not in Sorrows; theſe *Tears* are *wiped* " *away from their Eyes.* O happy, a thou- " ſand Times happy Souls! Alas, that I muſt " dwell in ſinful Fleſh, when my Brethren and " Companions dwell with God! How far out " of Sight and Reach of their high Enjoy- " ments do I here live? What poor feeble " Thoughts have I of God? What cold Af- " fections towards him? How little have I of

" that

" that Life, that Love, that Joy, in which they
" continually live? How ſoon doth that little
" depart, and leave me in thicker Darkneſs?
" Now and then a Spark falls upon my Heart,
" and while I gaze upon it, it dies, or rather
" my cold Heart quenches it. But they have
" their *Light in his Light*, and drink continually
" at the Spring of Joys. Here we are vexing
" each other with Quarrels, when they are of
" one Heart and Voice, and daily ſound forth
" the Hallelujahs of Heaven with perfect Har-
" mony. O what a Feaſt hath my Faith beheld,
" and what a Famine is yet in my Spirit! O
" bleſſed Souls! I may not, I dare not, envy
" your Happineſs; I rather rejoice in my Bre-
" thren's Proſperity, and am glad to think of
" the Day when I ſhall be admitted into your
" Fellowſhip. I wiſh, not to diſplace you, but
" to be ſo happy as to be with you. Why
" muſt I ſtay, and weep, and wait? My Lord
" is gone; He hath left this Earth, and is en-
" tered into his Glory; my Brethren are gone;
" my Friends are there; my Houſe, my Hope,
" my All is there. When I am ſo far diſtant
" from my God, wonder not *what aileth me*,
" if I now complain; an ignorant *Micah* will
" do ſo for his Idol, and ſhall not my Soul do ſo
" for the living God? Had I no Hope of En-
" joyment, I would go hide myſelf in the De-
" ſerts, and lie and howl in ſome obſcure
" Wilderneſs, and ſpend my Days in fruitleſs
" Wiſhes; but ſince it is the Land of my

" promiſed Reſt, and the State I muſt myſelf " be advanced to, and my Soul draws near, " and is almoſt at it, I will love and long, " I will look and deſire, I will be breathing, " How long, Lord! how long wilt thou ſuffer " this Soul to pant and groan, and not open to " him who waits, and longs to be with thee!" Thus, *Chriſtian Reader*, let thy Thoughts aſpire, till thy Soul longs, as *David*, *O that one would give me to drink of the Wells of Salvation!* And till thou canſt ſay as he did, *I have longed for thy Salvation, O Lord* (b). And as the Mother and Brethren of Chriſt, when they could not come at Him, becauſe of the Multitude, ſent to Him, ſaying, *Thy Mother and Brethren ſtand without, deſiring to ſee thee*; ſo let thy Meſſage to Him be, and He will own thee; for he hath ſaid, *They that hear my Word, and do it, are my Mother, and my Brethren* (c).

§ 14. (3) *Another Affection to be exerciſed in heavenly Contemplation, is Hope.* This helps to ſupport the Soul under Sufferings, animates it to the greateſt Difficulties, gives it Firmneſs in the moſt ſhaking Trials, enlivens it in Duties, and is the very Spring that ſets all the Wheels a going. Who would believe or ſtrive for Heaven, if it were not for the Hope that he hath to obtain it? Who would pray, but for the Hope to prevail with God? If your Hope dies, your Duties die, your Endeavours die, your Joys die, and your Souls die. And if your Hope be not in Ex-

(b) Pſalm cxix. 174. (c) Luke viii. 20, 21.

Exerciſe, but aſleep, it is next to dead. Therefore, *Chriſtian Reader*, when thou art winding up thy Affections to Heaven, forget not to give one Lift to thy Hope. Think thus, and reaſon thus with thy own Heart; " Why ſhould I not confi-
" dently and comfortably hope, when my Soul is
" in the Hands of ſo compaſſionate a Saviour,
" and when a Kingdom is at the Diſpoſal of ſo
" bountiful a God? Did he ever diſcover the
" leaſt Backwardneſs to my Good, or Inclinati-
" on to my Ruin? Hath he not ſworn, that
" *He delights not in the Death of him that dieth,*
" *but rather that he ſhould repent and live?* Have
" not all his Dealings witneſſed the ſame? Did
" He not mind me of my Danger, when I ne-
" ver feared it, becauſe He would have me eſ-
" cape it? Did He not mind me of my Hap-
" pineſs, when I had no Thoughts of it, becauſe
" He would have me enjoy it? How often hath
" He drawn me to Himſelf, and his Chriſt,
" when I have drawn backward? How hath
" his Spirit inceſſantly ſolicited my Heart? And
" would He have done all this, if He had been
" willing that I ſhould periſh? Should I not
" hope, if an honeſt Man had promiſed me
" ſomething in his Power? And ſhall I not
" hope, when I have the Covenant and Oath
" of God? It is true, the Glory is out of Sight;
" we have not beheld the Manſions of the
" Saints; but is not the Promiſe of God more
" certain than our Sight? *We* muſt not be *ſaved*
" by Sight, but *by Hope, and Hope that is ſeen*

" *is not Hope; for what a Man ſeeth, why doth*
" *he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we*
" *ſee not, then do we with Patience wait for*
" *it* (d). I have been aſhamed of my Hope in
" an Arm of Fleſh, but *Hope* in the Promiſe of
" God, *maketh not aſhamed* (e). In my greateſt
" Sufferings I will ſay, *The Lord is my Portion,*
" *therefore will I hope in Him; the Lord is good*
" *unto them that wait for Him, to the Soul that*
" *ſeeketh Him. It is good that a Man ſhould*
" *both hope and quietly wait for the Salvation of*
" *the Lord. For the Lord will not caſt-off for*
" *ever. But though He cauſe Grief, yet will He*
" *have Compaſſion, according to the Multitude of*
" *his Mercies* (f). Tho' I languiſh and die, yet
" will I hope; for *the Righteous hath Hope in*
" *his Death* (g). Tho' I muſt lie down in Duſt
" and Darkneſs, yet there *my Fleſh ſhall reſt in*
" *Hope* (h). And when my Fleſh hath nothing
" to rejoice in, yet will I *hold faſt the rejoicing*
" *of the Hope firm unto the End* (i); for *the Hope*
" *of the Righteous ſhall be Gladneſs* (k). Indeed,
" if I was myſelf to ſatisfy divine Juſtice, then
" there had been no Hope; but Chriſt hath
" *brought in a better Hope, by the which we draw*
" *nigh unto God* (l). Or, if I had to do with a
" feeble Creature, there were ſmall Hope; for
" how could he raiſe this Body from the Duſt,
" and lift me above the Sun? But what is this

" to

(d) Rom. viii. 24, 25.
(e) Rom. v. 5.
(f) Lam. iii. 24—26, 31, 32.
(g) Prov. xiv. 32.
(h) Pſalm xvi. 9.
(i) Heb. iii. 6.
(k) Prov. x. 28.
(l) Heb. vii. 19.

" to the Almighty Power, which made the " Heavens and the Earth out of nothing? Cannot that Power which raiſed Chriſt from the " Dead, raiſe me? and that, which hath glorified the Head, glorify alſo the Members? " *Doubtleſs, by the Blood of his Covenant, God will ſend forth his Priſoners out of the Pit wherein is no Water*; therefore will I *turn to the ſtrong Hold*, as *a Priſoner of Hope* (m)."

§ 15. (4) *Courage or Boldneſs is another Affection to be exerciſed in heavenly Contemplation.* It leadeth to Reſolution, and concludeth in Action. When you have raiſed your Love, Deſire, and Hope, go on and think thus with yourſelf; " *Will God indeed dwell with Men?* " And is there ſuch a Glory within the Reach " of Hope? Why then do I not lay hold upon it? Where is the chearful Vigour of my " Spirit? Why do I not *gird up the Loins of my Mind* (n)? Why don't I ſet upon my " Enemies on every Side, and valiantly break " through all Reſiſtance? What ſhould ſtop " me, or intimidate me? Is God with me, or " againſt me in the Work? Will Chriſt ſtand " by me, or will he not? *If God* and Chriſt " *be for me, who can be againſt me* (o)? In the " Work of Sin, almoſt all Things are ready to " help us, and only God and his Servants are " againſt us, yet how ill doth that Work proſper in our Hands? But in my Courſe to " Heaven, almoſt all Things are againſt me,

(m) Zech. ix. 11, 12. (n) 1 Pet. i. 13. (o) Rom. viii. 31.

" but God is for me; and therefore how hap-
" pily doth the Work ſucceed? Do I ſet upon
" this Work in my own Strength, or rather
" in the Strength of Chriſt my Lord? And
" *cannot I do all Things, through Him that*
" *ſtrengthens me* (p)? Was he ever foiled by an
" Enemy? He hath indeed been aſſaulted, but
" was he ever conquered? Why then doth my
" Fleſh urge me with the Difficulties of the
" Work? Is any Thing too hard for Omnipo-
" tence? May not *Peter* boldly walk on the
" Sea, if Chriſt gives the Word of Command?
" If he begin to ſink, is it from the Weakneſs
" of Chriſt, or the Smallneſs of his Faith? Do
" I not well deſerve to be turned into Hell, if
" mortal Threats can drive me thither? Do I
" not well deſerve to be ſhut out of Heaven, if
" I will be frighted from thence with the Re-
" proach of Tongues? What if it were *Fa-*
" *ther*, or *Mother*, or *Husband*, or *Wife*, or the
" neareſt Friend I have in the World, (if they
" may be called Friends that would draw me
" to Damnation) ſhould not I forſake all that
" would keep me from Chriſt? Will their
" Friendſhip countervail the Enmity of God,
" or be any Comfort to my condemned Soul?
" Shall I be yielding to the Deſires of Men,
" and only harden myſelf againſt the Lord?
" Let them beſeech me upon their Knees, I
" will ſcorn to ſtop my Courſe to behold them;
" I will ſhut my Ears to their Cries: Let them
" flatter,

(p) Phil. iv. 13.

" flatter, or frown; let them draw out Tongues " or Swords againſt me; I am reſolved in the " Strength of Chriſt to break through, and " look upon them as Duſt: If they would en- " tice me with Preferment, even with the " Kingdoms of the World, I will no more re- " gard them than the Dung of the Earth. O " bleſſed Reſt! O glorious State! Who would " ſell thee for Dreams and Shadows? Who " would be enticed or affrighted from thee? " Who would not ſtrive, and fight, and watch, " and run, and that with Violence, even to the " laſt Breath, in order to obtain thee? Surely " none, but thoſe that know thee not, and be- " lieve not thy Glory."

§ 16. (5) *The laſt Affection to be exerciſed in heavenly Contemplation, is Joy.* Love, Deſire, Hope, and Courage, all tend to raiſe our Joy. This is ſo deſirable to every Man by Nature, and ſo eſſentially neceſſary to conſtitute our Happineſs, that, I hope, I need not ſay much to perſuade you to any Thing that would make your Life delightful. Suppoſing you therefore already convinced, that the Pleaſures of the Fleſh are brutiſh and periſhing, and that your ſolid and laſting Joy muſt be from Heaven, inſtead of perſuading, I will proceed in directing. *Reader*, if thou haſt managed well the former Work, thou art got within Sight of thy Reſt; thou believeſt the Truth of it; thou art convinced of its Excellency; thou art fallen in love with it; thou longeſt after it; thou hopeſt for it; and thou art reſolved to venture courageouſly

giouſly for obtaining it. But is here any Work for Joy in this? We delight in the Good we poſſeſs; it is preſent Good that is the Object of Joy; and thou wilt ſay, "Alas! I am yet without it." But think a little farther with thyſelf. Is it nothing to have a Deed of Gift from God? Are his infallible Promiſes no Ground of Joy? Is it nothing to live in daily Expectation of entering into the Kingdom? Is not my Aſſurance of being hereafter glorified, a ſufficient Ground for inexpreſſible Joy? Is it not a Delight to the Heir of a Kingdom, to think of what he muſt ſoon poſſeſs, though at preſent he little differ from a Servant? Have we not both Command, and Example, for *rejoicing in Hope of the Glory of God* (q)?

§ 17. HERE then, *Reader*, take thy Heart once more, and carry it to the Top of the higheſt Mount; *ſhew it the Kingdom of Chriſt, and the Glory of it*, and ſay to it, "*All this will* "*thy Lord give thee*, who haſt *believed in Him*, "and been a *Worſhipper of Him. It is the Fa-* "*ther's good Pleaſure to give thee this Kingdom* "(r). Seeſt thou this aſtoniſhing Glory which "is above thee? All this is thy own Inheri- "tance. This Crown is thine, theſe Pleaſures "are thine; this Company, this beautiful Place, "all are thine; becauſe thou art Chriſt's, and "Chriſt is thine; when thou waſt united to "him, thou hadſt all theſe with him." Thus take thy Heart into *the Land of Promiſe*; ſhew it the pleaſant Hills, and fruitful Vallies; ſhew it

(q) Rom. v. 2. xii. 12. (r) Luke xii. 32.

it the Cluſters of Grapes which thou haſt gathered, to convince it that it is a bleſſed Land, *flowing with* better than *Milk and Honey:* Enter the Gates of the *holy City*; walk thro' the Streets of the *New Jeruſalem*; *walk about Sion, and go round about her*; *tell the Towers thereof*; *mark well her Bulwarks*; *conſider her Palaces*; *that thou mayſt tell it to thy* Soul (s). *Hath* it not *the Glory of God, and is* not *her Light like unto a Stone moſt precious, even like a Jaſper-Stone, clear as Cryſtal?* See the *twelve Foundations of her Walls, and in them the Names of the twelve Apoſtles of the Lamb. And the Building of the Walls of it are of Jaſper*; *and the City is pure Gold, like unto clear Glaſs*; *and the Foundations are garniſhed with all Manner of precious Stones. And the twelve Gates are twelve Pearls, every ſeveral Gate is of one Pearl*; *and the Street of the City is pure Gold, as it were tranſparent Glaſs. There is no Temple in it*; *for the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, are the Temple of it. It hath no need of the Sun, neither of the Moon in it*; *for the Glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof*; *and the Nations of them which are ſaved, ſhall walk in the Light of it. Theſe Sayings are faithful and true: And the Lord God of the holy Prophets ſent his Angels,* and his own Son, *to ſhew unto his Servants the Things which muſt ſhortly be done* (t). Say now to all this, "This "is thy Reſt, O my Soul! And this muſt be "the

(s) Pſ. xlviii. 12, 13. (t) Rev. xxi. 11—24. xxii. 6.

" the Place of thy everlaſting Habitation. *Let*
" all the Sons of *Sion rejoice, let the Daugh-*
" *ters of Jeruſalem be glad*; for *great is the*
" *Lord, and greatly to be praiſed in the City of*
" *our God, in the Mountain of his Holineſs.*
" *Beautiful for Situation, the Joy of the whole*
" *Earth is Mount Sion. God is known in her*
" *Palaces for a Refuge* (u)."

§ 18. YET proceed on. The Soul that loves, aſcends frequently, and runs familiarly thro' the Streets of the *heavenly Jeruſalem*, viſiting the *Patriarchs* and *Prophets*, ſaluting the *Apoſtles*, and admiring the Armies of *Martyrs*: So do thou lead on thy Heart as from Street to Street; bring it into the Palace of the Great King; lead it, as it were, from Chamber to Chamber. Say to it, " Here muſt I lodge;
" here muſt I live; here muſt I praiſe; here
" muſt I love, and be beloved. I muſt ſhort-
" ly be one of this heavenly Choir, and be bet-
" ter skilled in the Muſick. Among this bleſ-
" ſed Company muſt I take up my Place; my
" Voice muſt join to make up the Melody.
" My Tears will then be wiped away; my
" Groans be turned to another Tune; my Cot-
" tage of Clay be changed to this Palace; my
" Priſon-Rags to theſe ſplendid Robes; and
" my ſordid Fleſh ſhall be put off, and ſuch a
" Sun-like ſpiritual Body be put on: *For the for-*
" *mer Things are* here *paſſed away* (w). *Glorious*
" *Things are ſpoken of thee, O City of God* (x)!
" When

(u) Pſ. xlviii. 11. 1—3. (w) Rev. xxi 4. (x) Pſ. lxxxvii. 3.

" When I look upon this glorious Place,
" what a Dunghill and Dungeon, methinks is
" Earth? O what Difference betwixt a Man
" feeble, pained, groaning, dying, rotting in
" the Grave, and one of these triumphant, shi-
" ning Saints? Here shall I *drink of the River*
" *of Pleasures, the Streams whereof make glad*
" *the City of God* (y). Must *Israel*, under the
" Bondage of the Law, *serve the Lord with*
" *Joyfulness, and with Gladness of Heart, for*
" *the Abundance of all Things* (z)? Surely I
" shall serve him with Joyfulness and Gladness
" of Heart, for the Abundance of Glory. Did
" persecuted Saints *take joyfully the spoiling of*
" *their Goods* (a)? And shall not I take joyful-
" ly such a full Reparation of all my Losses?
" Was it a celebrated *Day, wherein the Jews*
" *rested from their Enemies*, because it *was*
" *turned unto them from Sorrow to Joy, and*
" *from Mourning into a good Day* (b)? What a
" Day then will that be to my Soul, whose
" Rest and Change will be unconceivably
" greater? *When the wise Men saw the Star*
" that led to Christ, *they rejoiced with exceed-*
" *ding great Joy* (c): But I shall shortly see
" him, who is Himself *the bright and Morning*
" *Star* (d). If the Disciples *departed from the*
" *Sepulchre with great Joy*, when they had but
" heard that their Lord *was risen from the*
" *dead*

(y) Psalm xxxvi. 8. xlvi. 4.
(a) Heb. x. 34.
(c) Mat. ii. 10.
(z) Deut. xxviii. 47.
(b) Esth. ix. 22.
(d) Rev. xxii. 16.

" *dead* (e); what will be my Joy, when I ſee " him reigning in Glory, and myſelf raiſed to " a bleſſed Communion with him? Then ſhall " I indeed have *Beauty for Aſhes, the Oil of Joy* " *for Mourning, and the Garment of Praiſe for* " *the Spirit of Heavineſs*; and *Sion* ſhall be " *made an eternal Excellency, a Joy of many Ge-* " *nerations* (f). Why then do I not ariſe from " the Duſt, and ceaſe my Complaints? Why do " I not trample on vain Delights, and feed on " the foreſeen Delights of Glory? Why is not " my Life a continual Joy, and the Savour of " Heaven perpetually upon my Spirit?"

§ 19. LET me here obſerve, that there is no Neceſſity to exerciſe *theſe Affections*, either exactly *in this Order*, or all *at one Time*. Sometimes one of thy Affections may need more exciting, or may be more lively than the reſt; or, if thy Time be ſhort, one may be exerciſed one Day, and another upon the next; all which muſt be left to thy Prudence to determine. Thou haſt alſo an Opportunity, if inclined to make uſe of it, to exerciſe *oppoſite* and more *mixed Affections*; ſuch as,——*Hatred of Sin*, which would deprive thy Soul of theſe immortal Joys;—*godly Fear*, leſt thou ſhouldſt abuſe thy Mercy;——*godly Shame and Grief*, for having abuſed it;——*unfeigned Repentance*;—— *Self-Indignation*;—— *Jealouſy over thy Heart*; ——and *Pity* for thoſe, who are in Danger of loſing theſe immortal Joys.

§ 20.

(e) Mat. xxviii. 7, 8. (f) Iſa. lxi. 3. lx. 15.

§ 20. (III) *We are alſo to take Notice, how heavenly Contemplation is promoted by Soliloquy and Prayer.* Tho' Conſideration be the chief Inſtrument in this Work, yet, by itſelf, it is not ſo likely to affect the Heart. In this Reſpect Contemplation is like Preaching, where the mere explaining of Truths and Duties is ſeldom attended with ſuch Succeſs, as the lively Application of them to the Conſcience; and eſpecially when a divine Bleſſing is earneſtly ſought to accompany ſuch Application.

§ 21. (1) *By Soliloquy, or a pleading the Caſe with thyſelf, thou muſt in thy Meditation quicken thy own Heart.* Enter into a ſerious Debate with it. Plead with it in the moſt moving and affecting Language, and urge it with the moſt powerful and weighty Arguments. It is what holy Men of God have practiſed in all Ages. Thus *David, why art thou caſt down, O my Soul! And why art thou diſquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe Him, who is the Health of my Countenance, and my God* (g). And again, *Bleſs the Lord, O my Soul! and all that is within me, bleſs his holy Name. Bleſs the Lord, O my Soul! and forget not all his Benefits,* &c. (h). This *Soliloquy* is to be made uſe of according to the ſeveral Affections of the Soul, and according to its ſeveral Neceſſities. It is a preaching to one's Self: For as every good Maſter or Father of a Family is a good Preacher to his own Family; ſo every good Chriſtian is

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(g) Pſalm xlii. 11. (h) Pſalm ciii. 1—5.

a good Preacher to his own Soul. Therefore the very ſame Method which a Miniſter ſhould uſe in his preaching to others, every Chriſtian ſhould endeavour after in ſpeaking to himſelf. Obſerve the Matter and Manner of the moſt Heart-affecting Miniſter; let him be as a Pattern for your Imitation; and the ſame Way that he takes with the Hearts of his People, do thou alſo take with thy own Heart. Do this in thy heavenly Contemplation; explain to thyſelf the Things on which thou doſt meditate; confirm thy Faith in them from Scripture; and then apply them to thyſelf, according to their Nature, and thy own Neceſſity. There is no Need to object againſt this, from a Senſe of thy own Inability. Doth not God command thee to *teach the Scriptures diligently unto thy Children, and talk of them when thou ſitteſt in thine Houſe, and when thou walkeſt by the Way, and when thou lieſt down, and when thou riſeſt up* (i)? And if thou muſt have ſome Ability to teach thy Children, much more to teach thyſelf; and if thou canſt talk of divine Things to others, why not alſo to thy own Heart?

§ 22. (2) *Heavenly Contemplation is alſo promoted, by ſpeaking to God in Prayer*; as well as by ſpeaking to ourſelves in Soliloquy. *Ejaculatory Prayer* may very properly be intermixed with *Meditation*, as a Part of the Duty. How often do we find *David*, in the ſame *Pſalm*, ſometimes pleading with his Soul, and ſometimes

(i) Deut. vi. 7.

times with God? The *Apoſtle* bids us *ſpeak to ourſelves in Pſalms, and Hymns, amd ſpiritual Songs* (k); and no doubt we may alſo ſpeak to God in them. This keeps the Soul ſenſible of the divine Preſence, and tends greatly to quicken and raiſe it. As God is the higheſt Object of our Thoughts, ſo our viewing of Him, ſpeaking to Him, and pleading with Him, more elevates the Soul, and excites the Affections, than any other Part of *Meditation*. Tho' we remain unaffected, while we plead the Caſe with ourſelves; yet when we turn our Speech to God, it may ſtrike us with Awe; and the Holineſs and Majeſty of Him whom we ſpeak to, may cauſe both the Matter and Words to pierce the deeper. When we read, that *Iſaac went out to meditate in the Field*, the Margin ſays, *to pray*; for the *Hebrew* Word ſignifies both. Thus in our *Meditations*, to intermix *Soliloquy* and *Prayer*; ſometimes ſpeaking to our own *Hearts*, and ſometimes to *God*, is, I apprehend, the higheſt Step we can advance to in this heavenly Work. Nor ſhould we imagine, it will be as well to take up with *Prayer* alone, and lay aſide *Meditation*. For they are diſtinct Duties, and muſt both of them be performed. We need one, as well as the other, and therefore ſhall wrong ourſelves by neglecting either. Beſides, the Mixture of them, like Muſick, will be more engaging; as the one ſerves to put Life into the other. And our ſpeaking to ourſelves in *Medi-*

(k) Epheſ. v. 19.

tation, ſhould go before our ſpeaking to God in *Prayer*. For want of attending to this due Order, Men ſpeak to God with far leſs Reverence and Affection than they would ſpeak to an Angel, if he ſhould appear to them; or to a Judge, if they were ſpeaking for their Lives. Speaking to the God of Heaven in Prayer, is a weightier Duty than moſt are aware of.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

Heavenly Contemplation aſſiſted by ſenſible Objects, and guarded againſt a treacherous Heart.

§ 1. *As it is difficult to maintain a lively Impreſſion of heavenly Things, therefore* § 2. (I) *heavenly Contemplation may be aſſiſted by ſenſible Objects*; § 3. (1) *if we draw ſtrong Suppoſitions from Senſe*; *and* § 4—11. (2) *if we compare the Objects of Senſe with the Objects of Faith, ſeveral Inſtances of which are produced.* § 12. (II) *Heavenly Contemplation may alſo be guarded againſt a treacherous Heart, by conſidering,* § 13, 14. (1) *the great Backwardneſs of the Heart to this Duty,* § 15. (2) *its trifling in it,* § 16. (3) *its wandring from it, and* § 17. (4) *its too abruptly putting an End to it.*

§ 1. THE moſt difficult Part of *heavenly Contemplation,* is to maintain a lively Senſe of heavenly Things upon our Hearts. It is eaſier, merely to think of Heaven a whole Day, than to be lively and affectionate in thoſe Thoughts a Quarter of an Hour. *Faith* is im-

perfect, for we are renewed but *in Part*; and goes againſt a World of Reſiſtance; and being ſupernatural, is prone to decline and languiſh, unleſs it be continually excited. *Senſe* is ſtrong, according to the Strength of the Fleſh; and being natural, continues, while Nature continues. The Objects of Faith are far off; but thoſe of Senſe are nigh. We muſt go as far as Heaven for our Joys. To rejoice in what we never ſaw, nor ever knew the Man that did ſee, and this upon a mere Promiſe in the Bible; is not ſo eaſy as to rejoice in what we ſee and poſſeſs. It muſt therefore be a Point of ſpiritual Prudence, to call in Senſe to the Aſſiſtance of Faith. It will be a good Work, if we can *make Friends* of theſe uſual Enemies, and make them Inſtruments for raiſing us to God, which are ſo often the Means of drawing us from Him. Why hath God given us either our Senſes, or their common Objects, if they might not be ſerviceable to his Praiſe? Why doth the Holy Spirit deſcribe the Glory of the *new Jeruſalem*, in Expreſſions that are grateful to the Fleſh? Is it that we might think Heaven to be made of *Gold* and *Pearl?* or that Saints and Angels *eat* and *drink?* No, but to help us to conceive of them as we are able, and to uſe theſe borrowed Phraſes as a Glaſs, in which we muſt ſee the Things themſelves imperfectly repreſented, till we come to an immediate and perfect Sight ——And beſides ſhewing *how heavenly Contemplation may be aſſiſted by ſenſible Objects*,

jects,——this Chapter will also shew *how it may be preserved from a wandering Heart.*

§ 2. (1) In order that *heavenly Contemplation* may be *assisted by sensible Objects*, let me only advise——to *draw strong Suppositions from Sense*, and to *compare the Objects of Sense with Objects of Faith.*

§ 3. (1) *For the helping of thy Affections in heavenly Contemplation, draw as strong Suppositions as possible from thy Senses.* Think on the Joys above, as boldly as Scripture hath expressed them. Bring down thy Conceptions to the Reach of Sense. Both Love and Joy are promoted by familiar Acquaintance. When we attempt to think of God and Glory, without the Scripture-Manner of representing them, we are lost, and have nothing to fix our Thoughts upon; we set them so far from us, that our Thoughts are strange, and we are ready to say, What is above us, is nothing to us. To conceive of God and Glory, only as above our Conception, will beget but little Love; or as above our Love, will produce little Joy. Therefore put Christ no farther from you, than he hath put himself, lest the divine Nature be again inaccessible. Think of Christ as in our own glorified Nature. Think of glorified Saints, as Men made perfect. Suppose thyself a Companion with *John*, in his Survey of the *new Jerusalem*, and viewing the Thrones, the Majesty, the heavenly Hosts, the shining Splendor which he saw. Suppose thyself his Fellow-Traveller

into the celeſtial Kingdom, and that thou hadſt ſeen all the Saints in their *white Robes*, with *Palms in their Hands*; and that thou hadſt heard thoſe *Songs of Moſes, and of the Lamb*. If thou hadſt really ſeen and heard theſe Things, in what a Rapture wouldſt thou have been? And the more ſeriouſly thou putteſt this Suppoſition to thyſelf, the more will thy Meditation elevate thy Heart. Don't, like the *Papiſts*, draw them in Pictures; but get the livelieſt Picture of them in thy Mind that thou poſſibly canſt, by contemplating the Scripture-Account of them, till thou canſt ſay, " Methinks I ſee a Glimpſe of " Glory! Methinks I hear the Shouts of Joy " and Praiſe, and even ſtand by *Abraham* and " *David*, *Peter* and *Paul*, and other triumphant " Souls! Methinks I even ſee the Son of God " appearing in the Clouds, and the World " ſtanding at his Bar to receive their Doom; " and hear him ſay, *Come ye bleſſed of my Fa-* " *ther*; and ſee them go rejoicing into the Joy " of their Lord! My very Dreams of theſe " Things have ſometimes greatly affected me, " and ſhould not theſe juſt Suppoſitions much " more affect me? What if I had ſeen, with " *Paul*, thoſe *unutterable Things?* Or, with " *Stephen*, had ſeen *Heaven opened, and Chriſt* " *ſitting at the right Hand of God?* Surely that " one Sight was worth his Storm of Stones. " What if I had ſeen, as *Micaiah* did, *the Lord* " *ſitting upon his Throne, and all the Hoſt of* " *Heaven ſtanding on his right Hand, and on his* " *left?*

" *left?* Such Things did these Men of God see; " and I shall shortly see far more than ever " they saw, till they were loosed from Flesh, " as I must be." Thus you see how it excites our Affections in this heavenly Work, if we make strong and familiar Suppositions from our bodily Senses, concerning the State of Blessedness, as the Spirit hath in condescending Language expressed it.

§ 4. (2) *The other Way in which our Senses may promote this heavenly Work, is, by comparing the Objects of Sense with the Objects of Faith.* As for Instance:——*You may strongly argue with your Hearts, from the corrupt Delights of sensual Men, to the Joys above.* Think with yourselves; " Is it such a Delight to a Sinner to do " wickedly? And will it not be delightful indeed " to live with God? Hath the Drunkard such " Delight in his Cups, that the Fears of Damnation will not make him forsake them? " Will the Whoremaster rather part with his " Credit, Estate, and Salvation, than with his " brutish Delight? If the Way to Hell can afford such Pleasure, what then are the Pleasures of the Saints in Heaven? If the covetous Man hath so much Pleasure in his " Wealth, and the ambitious Man in Places " of Power and Titles of Honour; what then " have the Saints in everlasting Treasures, and " in heavenly Honours, where we shall be set " above Principalities and Powers, and be made " the glorious Spouse of Christ? How delight-

" fully will the Voluptuous follow their Re-
" creations from Morning to Night, or ſit at
" their Cards and Dice, Nights and Days toge-
" ther? O the Delight we ſhall have, when
" we come to our Reſt, in beholding the Face
" of the living God, and in ſinging forth Praiſes
" to Him and the Lamb!"——*Compare alſo the Delights above, with the lawful and moderate Delights of Senſe.* Think with thyſelf, " How
" ſweet is Food to my Taſte when I am hun-
" gry; eſpecially if it be, as *Iſaac* ſaid, *ſuch as*
" *I love*, which my Temperance and Appetite
" incline to? What Delight then muſt my Soul
" have in feeding on *Chriſt, the living Bread,*
" and in *eating with Him at his Table in his*
" *Kingdom?* Was a *Meſs of Pottage* ſo ſweet to
" *Eſau* in his Hunger, that he would buy it
" at ſo dear a Rate as his *Birth-right?* How
" highly then ſhould I value this never-periſh-
" ing Food? How pleaſant is Drink in the Ex-
" tremity of Thirſt, ſcarcely to be expreſſed;
" enough to make the *Strength of Sampſon re-*
" *vive?* O how delightful will it be to my Soul
" to drink of that *Fountain of living Water,*
" *which whoſo drinketh it ſhall thirſt no more?*
" How delightful are grateful Odours to the
" Smell; or Muſick to the Ear; or beautiful
" Sights to the Eye? What Fragrance then
" hath *the precious Ointment, which is poured on*
" *the Head* of our glorified Saviour, and which
" muſt be poured on the Head of all his Saints,
" and will fill all Heaven with its Odour? How

" de-

" delightful is the Musick *of the heavenly Host?*
" How pleasing will be those real Beauties a-
" bove? How glorious the *Building not made*
" *with Hands,* the House that God Himself
" dwells in, the Walks and Prospects in *the*
" *City of God,* and the celestial *Paradise!*"

§ 5.——*Compare also the Delights above, with those we find in natural Knowledge.* These are far beyond the Delights of Sense; but how much farther are the Delights of Heaven? Think then, " Can an *Archimedes* be so taken
" up with his mathematical Invention, that the
" Threats of Death cannot disengage him, but
" he will die in the Midst of his Contemplati-
" ons? Should I not be much more taken up
" with the Delights of Glory, and die with
" these Contemplations fresh upon my Soul; es-
" pecially when my Death will perfect my
" Delights, while those of *Archimedes* die with
" him? What exquisite Pleasure is it to dive
" into the Secrets of Nature, and find out the
" Mystery of Arts and Sciences; especially if we
" make a new Discovery in any one of them?
" What high Delights are there then in the
" Knowledge of God and Christ? If the Face
" of human Learning be so beautiful, as to
" make sensual Pleasures appear base and bru-
" tish; how beautiful then is the Face of God?
" When we meet with some choice Book, how
" could we read it Day and Night, almost for-
" getful of Meat, Drink, or Sleep? What De-
" lights are there then at God's right Hand,

" where

" where we ſhall know in a Moment all that " is to be known ?"——*Compare alſo the Delights above, with the Delights of Morality, and of the natural Affections.* What Delight had many ſober *Heathens* in the Rules and Practice of *moral* Duties, ſo that they took him alone for an honeſt Man, who did well through the Love of Virtue, and not merely for fear of Puniſhment; yea, ſo much valued was this *moral* Virtue, that they thought Man's chief Happineſs conſiſted in it? Think then, " What Excellen- " cy will there be in our heavenly Perfection, " and in that uncreated Perfection of God, " which we ſhall behold? What Sweetneſs is " there in the Exerciſe of natural Love, whe- " ther to Children, Parents, Yoke-Fellows, or " intimate Friends? Does *David* ſay of *Jona- " than, thy Love to me was wonderful, paſſing the " Love of Women?* Did *the Soul of Jonathan " cleave to David?* Had Chriſt Himſelf one " *Diſciple whom He eſpecially loved, and who " was wont to lean on his Breaſt?* If then the " Delights of cloſe and cordial Friendſhip be " ſo great, what Delight ſhall we have in the " Friendſhip of the moſt High, and in our mu- " tual Intimacy with Jeſus Chriſt, and in the " deareſt Love of the Saints? Surely this will " be a ſtricter Friendſhip, and theſe more lovely " and deſirable Friends, than ever the Sun be- " held; and both our Affections to our Father " and Saviour, and eſpecially theirs to us, will " be ſuch as we never knew here. If one An-

gel

" gel could deſtroy an Hoſt, the Affections of " Spirits muſt alſo be proportionably ſtronger, " ſo that we ſhall then love a thouſand Times " more ardently than we can now. As all the " Attributes and Works of God are incompre- " henſible, ſo is this of Love; He will love us " infinitely beyond our moſt perfect Love to " him. What then will there be in this mutual " Love?"

§ 6.——*Compare alſo the Excellencies of Heaven, with thoſe glorious Works of Creation, which our Eyes now behold.* What Wiſdom, Power, and Goodneſs, are manifeſted therein? How does the Majeſty of the Creator ſhine in this Fabrick of the World? *His Works are great, ſought out of all them that have Pleaſure therein.* What divine Skill in forming the Bodies of Men or Beaſts? What Excellency in every Plant? What Beauty in Flowers? What Variety and Uſefulneſs in Herbs, Fruits, and Minerals? What Wonders are contained in the Earth and its Inhabitants; the Ocean of Waters, with its Motions and Dimenſions; and the conſtant Succeſſion of Spring and Autumn, of Summer and Winter? Think then, " If theſe " Things, which are but Servants to ſinful " Man, are ſo full of myſterious Worth, what " is that Place where God himſelf dwells, and " which is prepared for *juſt Men made perfect* " with Chriſt? What Glory is there in the " leaſt of yonder Stars? What a vaſt reſplen- " dent Body is yonder Moon, and every Planet?

" What

" What an inconceivable Glory hath the Sun?
" But all this is nothing to the Glory of
" Heaven. Yonder Sun muſt there be laid a-
" ſide as uſeleſs. Yonder is but Darkneſs to the
" Luſtre of my Father's Houſe. I ſhall my-
" ſelf be as glorious as that Sun. This whole
" Earth is but my Father's Footſtool. This
" Thunder is nothing to his dreadful Voice.
" Theſe Winds are nothing to the Breath of
" his Mouth. If the *ſending Rain, and making*
" *the Sun to riſe on the Juſt, and on the Unjuſt,*
" be ſo wonderful, how much more wonder-
" ful and glorious will that Sun be, which muſt
" ſhine on none but Saints and Angels?"——
Compare alſo the Enjoyments above, with the Wonders of Providence in the Church and World. Would it not be an aſtoniſhing Sight, to ſee *the Sea ſtand as a Wall on the right Hand, and on the left, and the dry Land appear in the Midſt, and the People of Iſrael paſs ſafely through, and Pharoah and his Hoſt drowned?* or to have ſeen the ten *Plagues of Egypt?* or *the Rock guſhing forth Streams?* or *Manna and Quails rained from Heaven?* or *the Earth opening and ſwallowing up the Wicked?* But we ſhall ſee far greater Things than theſe; not only Sights more wonderful, but more delightful: There ſhall be no Blood, nor Wrath, intermingled; nor ſhall we cry out, as *the Men of Beth-ſhemeſh; Who is able to ſtand before this holy Lord God?* How aſtoniſhing, to ſee *the Sun ſtand ſtill* in the Firmament; or *the Dial of Ahaz go back ten Degrees?*

But

But we shall see when *there shall be no Sun*; or rather shall behold for ever a Sun of infinitely greater Brightness. What a Life should we live, if we could have *Drought or Rain* at our Prayers; or have *Fire from Heaven* to destroy our Enemies, as *Elijah* had; or raise the Dead, as *Elisha*; or miraculously *cure Diseases*, and *speak all Languages*, as the *Apostles?* Alas, these are nothing to the Wonders we shall see and possess with God; and all of them Wonders of Goodness and Love. We shall ourselves be the Subjects of more wonderful Mercies than any of these. *Jonah* was raised but from a three Day's Burial *in the Belly of a Fish*; but we shall be raised from many Years Rottenness and Dust; and that Dust exalted to the Glory of the Sun; and that Glory perpetuated through Eternity. Surely, if we observe but common Providences; as, the Motions of the Sun; the Tides of the Sea; the standing of the Earth; the watering it with Rain, as a Garden; the keeping in Order a wicked confused World; with many others; they are all admirable. But what are these to the *Sion* of God, the Vision of the divine Majesty, and the Order of the heavenly Hosts?——Add to these, *those particular Providences which thou hast thyself enjoyed and recorded through thy Life, and compare them with the Mercies thou shalt have above.* Look over the Mercies of thy Youth and riper Age, of thy Prosperity and Adversity, of thy several Places and Relations; are they not excellent and innumerable,

merable, rich and engaging? How ſweet was it to thee, when God reſolved thy Doubts; ſcattered thy Fears; prevented the Inconveniencies into which thy own Counſel would have caſt thee; eaſed thy Pains; healed thy Sickneſs; and raiſed thee up as from Death and the Grave? Think then, "Are all theſe ſo ſweet and precious, "that without them my Life would have been "a perpetual Miſery? Hath his Providence "on Earth lifted me ſo high, *and his Gentle-* "*neſs made me great?* How ſweet then will "his glorious Preſence be? How high will "his eternal Love exalt me? And how great "ſhall I be made in Communion with his "Greatneſs? If my Pilgrimage and Warfare "have ſuch Mercies, what ſhall I find in my "Home, and in my Triumph? If God com-"municates ſo much to me, while I remain a "Sinner; what will He beſtow when I am a "perfected Saint? If I have had ſo much at "ſuch a Diſtance from Him; what ſhall I "have in his immediate Preſence, where I "ſhall ever ſtand before his Throne?"

§ 7. —— *Compare the Joys above, with the Comforts thou haſt here received in Ordinances.* Hath not the *Bible* been to thee as an open Fountain, flowing with Comforts Day and Night? What ſuitable Promiſes have come into thy Mind; ſo that, with *David*, thou mayſt ſay, *Unleſs thy Law had been my Delight, I ſhould then have periſhed in mine Affliction?* Think then, "If his *Word* be ſo full of Conſolations, what

"over-

" overflowing Springs shall we find in God
" Himself? If his Letters are so comfortable,
" what will the Glories of his Presence be? If
" the Promise is so sweet, what will the Per-
" formance be? If the *Testament* of our Lord,
" and our Charter for the Kingdom, be so com-
" fortable, what will be our Possession of the
" Kingdom itself?"—Think farther, " What
" Delights have I also found in the *Word preа-*
" *ched?* When I have sat under a heaven-
" ly, Heart-searching Teacher, how hath my
" Heart been warmed? Methinks I have felt
" myself almost in Heaven. How often have
" I gone to the Congregation troubled in Spi-
" rit, and returned joyful? How often have I
" gone doubting, and God hath sent me home
" persuaded of his Love in Christ? What
" Cordials have I met with to animate me in
" every Conflict? If but the Face of *Moses*
" shine so gloriously, what Glory is there in
" the Face of God? If *the Feet of them that*
" *publish Peace, that bring good Tidings of Sal-*
" *vation, be beautiful*; how beautiful is the
" Face of the Prince of Peace? If *this Treasure*
" be so precious *in earthen Vessels*; what is that
" Treasure laid up in Heaven? *Blessed are the*
" *Eyes that see* what is seen there, *and the Ears*
" *that hear the Things* that are heard there.
" There shall I hear *Elijah*, *Isaiah*, *Jeremiah*,
" *John*, *Peter*, *Paul*; not preaching to Gain-
" sayers, in Imprisonment, Persecution, and
" Reproach; but triumphing in the Praises of
" Him

" Him that hath raiſed them to Honour and " Glory."——Think alſo, " What Joy is it to " have Acceſs and Acceptance in *Prayer*; that " I may always go to God, and open my Caſe, " and unboſom my Soul to Him, as to my " moſt faithful Friend? but it will be a more " unſpeakable Joy when I ſhall receive all " Bleſſings without asking, and all my Ne- " ceſſities and Miſeries will be removed, and " when God Himſelf will be the Portion and " Inheritance of my Soul." —— As for the *Lord's Supper*, " What a Priviledge is it to " be admitted to ſit at his Table, to have his " Covenant ſealed to me there? But all the " Life and Comfort there, is to aſſure me of " the Comforts hereafter. O the Difference " between the laſt Supper of Chriſt on Earth, " and the Marriage-Supper of the Lamb at the " great Day! Then his *Room* will be the glo- " rious Heavens; his *Attendants*, all the Hoſts " of Angels and Saints; no *Judas*, no unfur- " niſhed Gueſt, comes there, but the humble " Believers muſt ſit down by Him, and their " *Feaſt* will be their mutual loving and rejoi- " cing."—Concerning the *Communion of Saints*, think with thyſelf, " What a Pleaſure is it " to live with intelligent and heavenly Chriſti- " ans? *David* ſays of ſuch, *they were all his* " *Delight*. O what a delightful Society then " ſhall I have above? Had I but ſeen *Job* on " the Dunghill, what a Mirror of Patience? " and what will it be to ſee him in Glory? " How delightful to have heard *Paul* and *Silas*

" ſing-

" ſinging in the Stocks? How much more to
" hear them ſing Praiſes in Heaven? What
" Melody did *David* make on his Harp? But
" how much more melodious to hear that *ſweet*
" *Singer* in the heavenly Choir? What would
" I have given for an Hour's free Converſe
" with *Paul*, when he was juſt come down
" from the third Heaven? But I muſt ſhortly
" ſee thoſe Things myſelf, and poſſeſs what I
" ſee."——Once more, think of *praiſing God* in Concert with his Saints. " What if I
" had been in the Place of thoſe *Shepherds*,
" who ſaw, and heard, the heavenly Hoſt ſing-
" ing, *Glory to God in the higheſt, and on Earth*
" *Peace, good Will towards Men?* But I ſhall
" ſee and hear more glorious Things. How
" bleſſed ſhould I have thought myſelf, had I
" heard Chriſt in his *Thankſgivings to his Fa-*
" *ther?* How much more, when I ſhall hear
" Him pronounce me Bleſſed? If there was
" ſuch Joy at *bringing back the Ark*, or at *re-*
" *building the Temple*; what will there be in
" the *new Jeruſalem?* If *the Earth rent*, when
" the People rejoiced at *Solomon*'s Coronation;
" what a joyful Shout will there be at the ap-
" pearing of the King of the Church? If,
" *when the Foundations of the Earth were laid,*
" *the Morning-Stars ſang together, and all the*
" *Sons of God ſhouted for Joy*; what a joyful
" Song will there be, when the World of Glo-
" ry is both founded and finiſhed, when the

" *Top-Stone* is laid, and when *the holy City is* " *adorned as the Bride, the Lamb's Wife?*"

§ 8.——*Compare the Joy thou ſhalt have in Heaven, with what the Saints have found in the Way to it, and in the Foretaſtes of it.* When did God ever reveal the leaſt of Himſelf to any of his Saints, but the Joy of their Hearts was anſwerable to the Revelation? In what an Extacy was *Peter* on the Mount of Transfiguration? *Maſter,* ſays he, *it is good for us to be here; let us make three Tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moſes, and one for Elias.* As if he had ſaid, " O let us not go down again to yonder per- " ſecuting Rabble; let us not return to our " mean and ſuffering State. Is it not better to " ſtay here now we are here? Is not here better " Company, and ſweeter Pleaſure?" How was *Paul* lifted up with what he ſaw? How did the Face of *Moſes* ſhine, when he had been talking with God? Theſe were all extraordinary Foretaſtes; but little to the full beatifical Viſion. How often have we read and heard of dying Saints, who have been as full of Joy as their Hearts could hold; and when their Bodies have felt the Extremity of Sickneſs and Pain, have had much of Heaven in their Spirits, and their Joy hath far exceeded their Sorrows? If a Spark of this Fire be ſo glorious, even amidſt the Sea of Adverſity; what then is Glory itſelf? O the Joy that the *Martyrs* have felt in the Flames! They were Fleſh and Blood, as well as we; it muſt therefore be ſome excellent Thing that filled

filled their Spirits with Joy, while their Bodies were burning. Think, *Reader*, in thy Meditations, "Sure it must be some wonderful Fore-"taste of Glory, that made the Flames of Fire "easy, and the King of Terrors welcome. "What then is Glory itself? What a blessed "Rest, when the Thoughts of it made *Paul de-"sire to depart, and be with Christ*; and makes "the Saints never think themselves well, till "they are dead? Shall *Saunders* embrace the "Stake, and cry, *Welcome Cross?* And shall not "I more delightfully embrace my Blessedness, "and cry *Welcome Crown?* Shall *Bradford* kiss "the Faggot? And shall not I kiss the Savi-"our? Shall another poor Martyr rejoice to "have her Foot in the same Hole of the Stocks, "in which Mr. *Philpot*'s had been before her? "And shall not I rejoice, that my Soul shall "live in the same Place of Glory, where Christ "and his Apostles are gone before me? Shall "Fire and Faggot, Prisons and Banishment, "cruel Mockings and Scourgings, be more "welcome to others, than Christ and Glory "to me? God forbid."

§ 9. —— *Compare the Glory of the heavenly Kingdom, with the Glory of the Church on Earth, and of Christ in his State of Humiliation.* If Christ suffering in the Room of Sinners had such Excellency, what is Christ at his Father's right Hand? If the Church under her Sins and Enemies have so much Beauty, what will she have at the Marriage of the Lamb? How wonderful was the Son of God in the Form of a

Servant? When He is born, a new Star muſt appear, and conduct the Strangers to worſhip Him in a Manger; heavenly Hoſts with their Songs muſt celebrate his Nativity; while a Child, He muſt diſpute with Doctors; when He enters upon his Office, He turns Water into Wine; feeds Thouſands with a few Loaves and Fiſhes; cleanſes the Lepers, heals the Sick, reſtores the Lame, gives Sight to the Blind, and raiſes the Dead. How wonderful then is his celeſtial Glory? If there be ſuch *cutting down of Boughs, and ſpreading of Garments, and crying, Hoſanna*, for one that *comes into Jeruſalem riding on an Aſs*; what will there be when He comes with his Angels in his Glory? If they that heard Him *preach the Goſpel of the Kingdom*, confeſs, *Never Man ſpake like this Man*; they then that behold his Majeſty in his Kingdom, will ſay, *There was never Glory like this Glory*. If, when his Enemies came to apprehend Him, *they fell to the Ground*; if, when He is dying, *the Earth quakes, the Vail of the Temple is rent, the Sun eclipſed, the dead Bodies of the Saints ariſe, and the Standers-by acknowledge, verily this was the Son of God*; O what a Day will it be, when the Dead muſt all ariſe, and ſtand before Him; when *He will once more ſhake, not the Earth only, but the Heavens alſo*; when this Sun ſhall be taken out of the Firmament, and be everlaſtingly darkened with his Glory; and when every Tongue ſhall confeſs him to be Lord and King! If when he roſe again, Death and the Grave loſt their Power; if An-

ge's

gels muſt *roll away the Stone*, terrify *the Keepers* till they are *as dead Men*, and ſend the Tidings to his Diſciples; if He aſcend to Heaven in their Sight; what Power, Dominion, and Glory, is He now poſſeſſed of, and which we muſt for ever poſſeſs with Him! When He is gone, can a few poor Fiſhermen and Tentmakers cure the Lame, Blind, and Sick, open Priſons, deſtroy the Diſobedient, raiſe the Dead, and aſtoniſh their Adverſaries? What a World will that be, where every one can do greater Works than theſe! If the preaching of the Goſpel be accompanied with ſuch Power as to diſcover the Secrets of the Heart, humble the proud Sinner, and make the moſt obdurate tremble; if it can make Men *burn their Books, ſell their Lands, bring in the Price, and lay it down at the* Preacher's *Feet*; if it can convert thouſands, and *turn the World upſide down*; if its Doctrine, from the Priſoner at the Bar, can make the Judge on the Bench tremble; if Chriſt and his Saints have this Power and Honour in the Day of their Abaſement, and in the Time appointed for their Suffering and Diſgrace; what then will they have in their abſolute Dominion, and full Advancement in their Kingdom of Glory?

§ 10. —— *Compare the glorious Change thou ſhalt have at laſt, with the gracious Change which the Spirit hath here wrought on thy Heart.* There is not the ſmalleſt ſincere Grace in thee, but is of greater Worth than the Riches of the *Indies*; not a hearty Deſire and Groan after

Chriſt, but is more to be valued than the Kingdoms of the World. A renewed Nature is the very *Image of God*; *Chriſt dwelling in us*; and *the Spirit of God abiding in us*: It is a Beam from the Face of God; *the Seed of God remaining in us*; the only inherent Beauty of the rational Soul: It enobles Man above all Nobility; fits him to underſtand his Maker's Pleaſure, do his Will, and receive his Glory. If this *Grain of Muſtard-Seed* be ſo precious, what is *the Tree of Life in the Midſt of the Paradiſe of God?* If a Spark of Life, which will but ſtrive againſt Corruptions, and flame out a few Deſires and Groans, be of ſo much Worth; how glorious then is the Fountain of this Life? If we are ſaid to be *like God*, when we are preſſed down with a Body of Sin; ſure we ſhall be much more like God, when we have no ſuch Thing as Sin within us. Is the Deſire after, and Love of, Heaven ſo excellent; what then is the Thing itſelf? Is our Joy in foreſeeing and believing ſo ſweet; what will be the Joy of full Poſſeſſion? How glad is a Chriſtian when he feels his Heart begin to melt and be diſſolved with the Thoughts of ſinful Unkindneſs? Even this Sorrow yields him Joy. O what then will it be, when we ſhall know, and love, and rejoice, and praiſe in the higheſt Perfection? Think with thyſelf, "What a Change was it, "to be taken from that State wherein I was "born, and in which I was rivetted by Cuſtom, "when thouſands of Sins lay upon my Score, "and if I had ſo died I had been damned for

"ever

" ever? What an aſtoniſhing Change, to be " juſtified from all theſe enormous Crimes, and " freed from all theſe fearful Plagues, and " made an Heir of Heaven? How often, when " I have thought of my Regeneration, have " I cried out, O bleſſed Day! and bleſſed be " the Lord that ever I ſaw it! How then ſhall I " cry out in Heaven, O bleſſed Eternity! and " bleſſed be the Lord that brought me to it? " Did the Angels of God rejoice to ſee my Con- " verſion? Surely they will congratulate my " Felicity in my Salvation. Grace is but a Spark " raked up in the Aſhes, covered with Fleſh " from the Sight of the World, and ſometimes " covered with Corruption from my own Sight; " but my everlaſting Glory will not be ſo clou- " ded, nor my Light be *under a Buſhel, but* " *upon a Hill*, even upon Mount *Sion*, the " Mount of God."

§ 11. —— ONCE more, *compare the Joys which thou ſhalt have above, with thoſe Foretaſtes of it which the Spirit hath given thee here.* Hath not God ſometimes revealed Himſelf extraordinarily to thy Soul, and let a Drop of Glory fall upon it? Haſt thou not been ready to ſay, " O " that it might be thus with my Soul conti- " nually!" Didſt thou never cry out with the *Martyr*, after thy long and mournful Expecations, " *He is come, He is come?*" Didſt thou never, under a lively Sermon of Heaven, or in thy retired Contemplations on that bleſſed State, perceive thy drooping Spirits revive, and thy dejected Heart lift up the Head, and the Light

of Heaven dawn on thy Soul? Think with thyſelf "What is this Earneſt to the full Inheri-" tance? Alas, all this Light that ſo amazeth " and rejoiceth me, is but a Candle lighted " from Heaven, to lead me thither through " this World of Darkneſs! If ſome godly " Men have been overwhelmed with Joy, till " they have cried out, *Hold, Lord, ſtay thy* " *Hand*; *I can bear no more*: What then will " be my Joys in Heaven, when my Soul ſhall " be ſo capable of ſeeing and enjoying God, " that though the Light be ten thouſand Times " greater than the Sun, yet my Eyes ſhall be " able for ever to behold it?" Or if thou haſt not yet felt theſe ſweet Foretaſtes, (for every Believer hath not felt them) then make uſe of ſuch Delights as thou haſt felt, in order the better to diſcern what thou ſhalt hereafter feel.

§ 12. (II) *I am now to ſhew how heavenly Contemplation may be preſerved from a wandering Heart.* Our chief Work is here to diſcover the Danger, and that will direct to the fitteſt Remedy. The Heart will prove the greateſt Hinderance in this heavenly Employment; either, —*by Backwardneſs to it*;—or, by *trifling in it*; —or, *by frequent Excurſions to other Objects*; —or, *by abruptly ending the Work before it is well begun.* As you value the Comfort of this Work, theſe dangerous Evils muſt be faithfully reſiſted.

§ 13. (1) *Thou wilt find thy Heart as backward to this, I think, as to any Work in the World.* O what Excuſes will it make! What Evaſions will

will it find out! What Delays and Demurs, when it is ever ſo much convinced! Either it will queſtion, whether it be a Duty or not; or, if it be ſo to others, whether to thyſelf. It will tell thee, "This is a Work for Miniſters that "have nothing elſe to ſtudy; or for Perſons that "have more Leiſure than thou haſt." If thou be a Miniſter, it will tell thee, "This is the "Duty of the People; it is enough for thee "to meditate for their Inſtruction, and let them "meditate on what they have heard." As if it was thy Duty only to cook their Meat, and ſerve it up, and they alone muſt eat it, digeſt it, and live upon it. If all this will not do, thy Heart will tell thee of other Buſineſs, or ſet thee upon ſome other Duty, for it had rather go to any Duty than this. Perhaps it will tell thee, "Other Duties are greater, and therefore this "muſt give Place to them, becauſe thou haſt "no Time for both. Publick Buſineſs is more "important; to ſtudy and preach for the ſa-"ving of Souls, muſt be preferred before theſe "private Contemplations." As if thou hadſt not Time to care for thy own Salvation, for looking after that of others. Or thy Charity to others were ſo great, that it obliges thee to neglect thy own eternal Welfare. Or as if there were any better Way to fit us to be uſeful to others, than making this Proof of our Doctrine ourſelves. Certainly Heaven is the beſt Fire to light our Candle at, and the beſt Book for a Preacher to ſtudy; and if we would

be

be perſuaded to ſtudy that more, the Church would be provided with more heavenly Lights; and when our Studies are divine, and our Spirits divine, our Preaching will alſo be divine, and we may be called *Divines* indeed.—Or, if thy Heart have nothing to ſay againſt the Work, it will trifle away the Time in Delays, and promiſe this Day, and the next, but ſtill keep off from the Buſineſs.—Or, it will give thee a flat Denial, and oppoſe its own Unwillingneſs to thy Reaſon. All this I ſpeak of the Heart, ſo far as it is ſtill carnal; for I know, ſo far as it is ſpiritual, it will judge this the ſweeteſt Work in the World.

§ 14. WHAT is now to be done? Wilt thou do it, if I tell thee? Wouldſt thou not ſay in a like Caſe, "What ſhould I do with a Servant that "will not work? or with a Horſe that will not "travel? Shall I keep them to look at?" Then faithfully deal thus with thy Heart; perſuade it to the Work, take no Denial, chide it for its Backwardneſs, uſe Violence with it. Haſt thou no Command of thy own Thoughts? Is not the Subject of thy Meditations a Matter of Choice, eſpecially under this Conduct of thy Judgment? Surely God gave thee, with thy new Nature, ſome Power to govern thy Thoughts. Art thou again become a Slave to thy depraved Nature? Reſume thy Authority. Call in the Spirit of Chriſt to thine Aſſiſtance, who is never backward to ſo good a Work, nor will deny his Help in ſo juſt a Cauſe. Say to Him, "Lord, thou gaveſt my Reaſon the Command

"of

" of my Thoughts and Affections; the Autho-
" rity I have received over them is from thee;
" and now behold, they refuſe to obey thine
" Authority: Thou commandeſt me to ſet them
" to the Work of heavenly Meditation, but
" they rebel, and ſtubbornly refuſe the Duty.
" Wilt thou not aſſiſt me to exerciſe that Au-
" thority which thou haſt given me? O ſend
" down thy Spirit, that I may enforce thy
" Commands, and effectually compel them to
" obey thy Will!" Thus thou ſhalt ſee thy Heart will ſubmit, its Reſiſtance be overcome, and its Backwardneſs be turned into chearful Compliance.

§ 15. (2) *Thy Heart will alſo be likely to betray thee by trifling, when it ſhould be effectually meditating.* Perhaps when thou haſt an Hour for Meditation, the Time will be ſpent before thy Heart will be ſerious. This doing of Duty, as if we did it not, ruins as many as the Omiſſion of it. Here let thine Eye be always upon thy Heart. Look not ſo much to the Time it ſpends in the Duty, as to the Quantity and Quality of the Work that is done. You can tell by his Work, whether a Servant hath been diligent. Ask yourſelf, " What Affec-
" tions have yet been exerciſed? How much
" am I yet got nearer to Heaven?" Think not, ſince thy Heart is ſo trifling, it is better to let it alone: For, by this Means thou wilt certainly baniſh all ſpiritual Obedience; becauſe the beſt Hearts, being but ſanctified in Part,

will

will reſiſt, ſo far as they are carnal. But rather conſider well the Corruption of thy Nature; and that its ſinful Indiſpoſitions will not ſuperſede the Commands of God; nor one Sin excuſe for another; and that God has appointed Means to excite our Affections. This Self-reaſoning, Self-conſidering Duty of heavenly Meditation, is the moſt ſingular Means, both to excite and increaſe Love. Therefore ſtay not from the Duty till thou feeleſt thy Love conſtrain thee; any more than thou wouldſt ſtay from the Fire, till thou feeleſt thyſelf warm; but engage in the Work, till Love is excited, and then Love will conſtrain thee to further Duty.

§ 16. (3) *Thy Heart will alſo be making Excurſions from thy heavenly Meditation to other Objects.* It will be turning aſide, like a careleſs Servant, to talk with every one that paſſeth by. When there ſhould be nothing in thy Mind but Heaven, it will be thinking of thy Calling, or thy Afflictions, or of every Bird, or Tree, or Place thou ſeeſt. The Cure is here the ſame as before; uſe Watchfulneſs and Violence. Say to thy Heart, "What, did I "come hither to think of my worldly Buſi-"neſs, of Perſons, Places, News, or Vanity, "or of any Thing but Heaven, be it ever ſo "good? *Canſt thou not watch one Hour?* "Wouldſt thou leave this World, and dwell "for ever with Chriſt in Heaven, and not "leave it one Hour to dwell with Chriſt in "Meditation? *Is this thy Love to thy Friend?* "Doſt thou love Chriſt, and the Place of thy "eternal

" eternal, bleſſed Abode, no more than this?" If *the* ravening *Fowls* of wandering Thoughts devour the Meditations intended for Heaven, they devour the Life and Joy of thy Thoughts: Therefore *drive them away* from thy Sacrifice, and ſtrictly keep thy Heart to the Work.

§ 17. (4) *Abruptly ending thy Meditation before it is well begun, is another Way in which thy Heart will deceive thee.* Thou mayſt eaſily perceive this in other Duties. In *ſecret Prayer*, is not thy Heart urging thee to cut it ſhort, and frequently making a Motion to have done? So in *heavenly Contemplation*, thy Heart will be weary of the Work, and will ſtop thy heavenly Walk before thou art well warm. But charge it in the Name of God to ſtay, and not do ſo great a Work by Halves. Say to it, " Fooliſh " Heart! if thou beg a while, and goeſt away " before thou haſt thy Alms, is not thy Beg- " ging a loſt Labour? If thou ſtoppeſt before " the End of thy Journey, is not thy Travel " loſt? Thou cameſt hither in Hope to have " a Sight of the Glory which thou muſt inhe- " rit; and wilt thou ſtop when thou art almoſt " at the Top of the Hill, and turn back before " thou haſt taken thy Survey? Thou cameſt " hither in Hope to ſpeak with God, and wilt " thou go before thou haſt ſeen Him? Thou " cameſt to bathe thyſelf in the Streams of " Conſolation, and to that End didſt un- " cloath thyſelf of thy earthly Thoughts; and " wilt thou only touch the Bank, and return?

" Thou

" Thou cameſt to *ſpy out the Land of Promiſe*;
" go not back without *one Cluſter of Grapes, to*
" *ſhew thy Brethren* for their Encouragement.
" Let them ſee that thou haſt taſted of the
" Wine, by the Gladneſs of thy Heart; and
" that thou haſt been anointed with the Oil,
" by the Chearfulneſs of thy Countenance;
" and haſt fed of the Milk and Honey, by
" the Mildneſs of thy Diſpoſition, and the
" Sweetneſs of thy Converſation. This hea-
" venly Fire would melt thy frozen Heart,
" and refine and ſpiritualize it; but it muſt
" have Time to operate." Thus purſue the Work till ſomething be done, till thy Graces be in Exerciſe, thy Affections raiſed, and thy Soul refreſhed with the Delights above; or if thou canſt not obtain theſe Ends at once, be the more earneſt at another Time. *Bleſſed is that Servant, whom his Lord, when he cometh, ſhall find ſo doing.*

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

Heavenly Contemplation exemplified, and the whole Work concluded.

§ 1. *The Reader's Attention excited to the following Example of Meditation.* § 2. ‘ *The Excellencies of heavenly Reſt*; § 3. *its Nearneſs*; § 4. *dreadful to Sinners,* § 5. *and joyful to Saints*; § 6. *its dear Purchaſe*; § 7. *its Difference from Earth.* § 8. *The Heart pleaded with.* § 9. *Unbelief baniſhed.* § 10. *A careleſs World pitied.* § 11—13. *Heavenly Reſt the Object of Love,* § 14—21. *and Joy.* § 22. *The Heart's Backwardneſs to heavenly Joy lamented.* § 23—27. *Heavenly Reſt the Object of Deſire.*’ § 28. *Such Meditation as this urged upon the Reader:* § 29. *The Miſchief of neglecting it:* § 30. *The Happineſs of purſuing it.* § 31. *The Author's concluding Prayer for the Succeſs of his Work.*

§ 1. AND now, *Reader*, according to the above Directions, make Conſcience of *daily exerciſing thy Graces in Meditation*, as well as *Prayer*: Retire into ſome *ſecret Place*, at a *Time the moſt convenient* to thyſelf, and *laying*

ing aſide all worldly Thoughts, with all poſſible Serioufneſs and Reverence, look up toward *Heaven,* remember there is thine *everlaſting Reſt,* ſtudy its *Excellency* and *Reality,* and riſe from *Senſe to Faith,* by *comparing heavenly with earthly Joys:* Then mix *Ejaculations* with thy *Soliloquies;* till having *pleaded* the Caſe reverently with *God,* and ſeriouſly with thy own *Heart,* thou haſt pleaded thyſelf from a *Clod* to a *Flame,* from a *forgetful Sinner,* and a *Lover of the World,* to an ardent *Lover of God,* from a *fearful Coward* to a *reſolved Chriſtian,* from an *unfruitful Sadneſs* to a *joyful Life;* In a Word, till thou haſt pleaded thy Heart from *Earth* to *Heaven,* from *converſing below* to *walking with God,* and till thou canſt lay thy Heart to reſt, as in the Boſom of Chriſt, by ſome ſuch *Meditation* of thy *everlaſting Reſt,* as is here added for thy Aſſiſtance.

§ 2. ‘ *Reſt!* How ſweet the Sound! It is ‘ Melody to my Ears! It lies as a reviving Cor- ‘ dial at my Heart, and from thence ſends forth ‘ lively Spirits, which beat through all the Pul- ‘ ſes of my Soul! Reſt, not as the Stone that ‘ reſts on the Earth, nor as this Fleſh ſhall reſt ‘ in the Grave, nor ſuch a Reſt as the carnal ‘ World deſires. O bleſſed Reſt! When we ‘ *reſt not Day and Night, ſaying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!* When we ſhall reſt ‘ from Sin, but not from Worſhip; from Suf- ‘ fering and Sorrow, but not from Joy! O ‘ bleſſed Day! When I ſhall reſt with God!

‘ When

'When I ſhall reſt in the Boſom of my Lord! 'When I ſhall reſt in knowing, loving, rejoi-'cing, and praiſing! When my perfect Soul 'and Body ſhall together perfectly enjoy the 'moſt perfect God! When God, *who is Love* 'itſelf, ſhall perfectly love me, and *reſt in his* '*Love* to me, as I ſhall reſt in my Love to 'Him; and *rejoice over me with Joy*, and *joy* '*over me with Singing*, as I ſhall rejoice in 'Him!'

§ 3. 'How near is that moſt bleſſed, joyful 'Day! It comes apace. *He that ſhall come* '*will come, and will not tarry.* Though *my* '*Lord* ſeems to *delay his Coming*, yet *a little* '*while* and He will be here. What is a few 'hundred Years, when they are over? How 'ſurely will *his Sign appear?* How ſuddenly 'will He ſeize upon the careleſs World, even '*as the Lightening cometh out of the Eaſt, and* '*ſhineth unto the Weſt?* He who is gone hence '*ſhall ſo come.* Methinks I hear his *Trumpet* '*ſound!* Methinks I *ſee Him coming with Clouds*, 'with his attending Angels in Majeſty and 'Glory!'

§ 4. 'O ſecure *Sinners!* What now will you 'do? Where will you *hide yourſelves?* What 'ſhall *cover* you? *Mountains* are gone; *the* '*Heavens and the Earth which were*, are *paſſed* '*away*; the devouring Fire hath conſumed all, 'except yourſelves, who muſt be the Fuel for 'ever. O that you could conſume as ſoon as 'the Earth; and *melt* away as did *the Heavens!*

'Ah, theſe Wiſhes are now but vain! The 'Lamb Himſelf would have been your Friend; 'He would have loved you, and ruled you, 'and now have ſaved you; but you would not 'then, and *now* it is too late. Never cry, *Lord*, 'Lord; too late, too late, *Man*. Why doſt 'thou look about? Can any ſave thee? Whi-'ther doſt thou run? Can any hide thee? O 'Wretch, that haſt brought thyſelf to this!'

§ 5. 'Now *bleſſed Saints*, that have belie-'ved and obeyed! This is the End of Faith 'and Patience. This is it for which you pray-'ed and waited. Do you now repent your 'Sufferings and Sorrows, your Self-denying 'and holy walking? Are your Tears of Re-'pentance now bitter or ſweet? See how the '*Judge* ſmiles upon you; there is Love in his 'Looks; the Titles of *Redeemer*, *Husband*, '*Head*, are written in his amiable, ſhining 'Face. Hark, He calls you; He bids you ſtand 'here *on his right Hand*; fear not, for there '*He ſets his Sheep*. O joyful Sentence! *Come*, '*ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom* '*prepared for you from the Foundation of the* '*World*. He takes you by the Hand, the 'Door is open, the Kingdom is his, and there-'fore yours; there is your Place before his 'Throne; the Father receives you as the 'Spouſe of his Son, and bids you welcome to 'the Crown of Glory. Ever ſo unworthy, 'you muſt be crowned. This was the Pro-'ject of free redeeming Grace, the Purpoſe of

'eternal

'eternal Love. O bleſſed Grace! O bleſſed 'Love! O how Love and Joy will riſe! But 'I cannot expreſs it, I cannot conceive it.'

§ 6. 'THIS is that Joy which was procured 'by Sorrow, that Crown which was procured 'by the Croſs. My Lord *wept*, that now my '*Tears might be wiped away*; He bled, that I 'might now rejoice; He was *forſaken*, that I 'might not now be forſook; He then *died*, '*that I might* now *live*. O free Mercy, that can 'exalt ſo vile a Wretch! Free to me, tho' dear 'to Chriſt! Free Grace, that hath choſen 'me, when thouſands were forſaken! When 'my Companions in Sin muſt burn in Hell, I 'muſt here rejoice in *Reſt!* Here muſt I live 'with all theſe *Saints!* O comfortable Mee-'ting of my old Acquaintance, with whom I 'prayed, and wept, and ſuffered, and *ſpoke* '*often* of this Day and Place! I ſee the Grave 'could not detain you; the ſame Love hath 'redeemed and ſaved you alſo.'

§ 7. 'THIS is not like our Cottages of Clay, 'our Priſons, our earthly Dwellings. This 'Voice of Joy is not like our old Complaints, 'our impatient Groans and Sighs; nor this 'melodious Praiſe like the Scoffs and Revi-'lings, or the Oaths and Curſes, which we 'heard on Earth. This Body is not like that 'we had, nor this Soul like the Soul we had, 'nor this Life like the Life we lived. We 'have changed our *Place* and *State*, our *Cloaths* 'and *Thoughts*, our *Looks*, *Language*, and *Com-*

'*pany*. *Before*, a *Saint* was weak and deſpiſed; 'ſo proud and peeviſh, we could often ſcarce 'diſcern his Graces: But *now* how glorious a 'Thing is a *Saint!* Where is now their Body 'of Sin, which wearied themſelves and thoſe 'about them? Where are now our different 'Judgments, reproachful Names, divided Spi-'rits, exaſperated Paſſions, ſtrange Looks, un-'charitable Cenſures? Now we are all of one '*Judgment*, of one *Name*, of one *Heart*, *Houſe*, 'and *Glory*. O ſweet Reconciliation! Happy 'Union! Now the Goſpel ſhall no more be 'diſhonoured through our Folly. No more, 'my Soul, ſhalt thou lament the Sufferings of 'the Saints, or the Church's Ruins, nor mourn 'thy ſuffering Friends, nor weep over their 'dying Beds, or their Graves. Thou ſhalt ne-'ver ſuffer thy old Temptations from Satan, 'the World, or thy own Fleſh. Thy Pains 'and Sickneſſes are all cured; thy Body ſhall 'no more burthen thee with Weakneſs and 'Wearineſs; thy aching Head and Heart, thy 'Hunger and Thirſt, thy Sleep and Labour, 'are all gone. O what a mighty Change is 'this! From the Dunghill to the Throne! 'From perſecuting Sinners, to praiſing Saints! 'From a *vile Body*, to this which *ſhines as the* '*Brightneſs of the Firmament!* From a Senſe 'of God's Diſpleaſure, to the perfect Enjoy-'ment of Him in Love! From all my Doubts 'and Fears, to this Poſſeſſion, which puts me 'out of Doubt! From all my fearful Thoughts

'of

'of Death, to this joyful Life! Bleſſed Change!
'Farewel Sin and Sorrow for ever: Farewel
'my rocky, proud, unbelieving Heart; my
'worldly, ſenſual, carnal Heart: And wel-
'come now my moſt holy, heavenly Nature.
'Farewel Repentance, Faith, and Hope; and
'welcome Love, and Joy, and Praiſe. I ſhall
'now have my Harveſt, without ploughing or
'ſowing; my Joy without a Preacher, or a
'Promiſe; even all from the Face of God
'Himſelf. Whatever Mixture is in the Streams,
'there is nothing but pure Joy in the Foun-
'tain. Here ſhall I be encircled with Eternity,
'and ever live, and ever, ever praiſe the Lord.
'My Face will not wrinkle, nor my Hair be
'grey; *for this corruptible* ſhall have *put on In-*
'corruption, and this mortal Immortality, and
'Death ſhall be *ſwallowed up in Victory! O*
'Death, where is now *thy Sting? O Grave,*
'where is thy Victory? The Date of my Leaſe
'will no more expire, nor ſhall I trouble my-
'ſelf with Thoughts of Death, nor loſe my
'Joys through Fear of loſing them. When
'Millions of Ages are paſs'd, my Glory is but
'beginning; and when Millions more are
'paſs'd, it is no nearer ending. Every Day is
'all Noon, every Month is Harveſt, every
'Year is a Jubilee, every Age is full Manhood,
'and all this is one Eternity. O bleſſed Eter-
'nity! The Glory of my Glory! The Perfec-
'tion of my Perfection!'

§ 8. 'Ah drowſy, earthly *Heart!* How 'coldly doſt thou think of this reviving Day? 'Hadſt thou rather ſit down in Dirt, than walk 'in the Palace of God? Art thou now remem-'bering thy worldly Buſineſs, or thinking of 'thy Luſts, earthly Delights, and merry Com-'pany? Is it better to be here, than above with 'God? Is the Company better? Are the Plea-'ſures greater? Come away; make no Ex-'cuſe, nor Delay; God commands, and I com-'mand thee; gird up thy Loins; aſcend the '*Mount*; look about thee with *Faith* and *Seri-'ouſneſs*. Look not back upon the Way of 'the Wilderneſs; except it be to *compare* the 'Kingdom with that howling Deſert, more 'ſenſibly to perceive the wide Difference. Yon-'der is thy Father's Glory; yonder, O my 'Soul! muſt thou remove, when thou de-'parteſt from this Body; and when the Power 'of thy Lord hath raiſed it again, and joined 'thee to it, yonder muſt thou live with God 'for ever. There is the glorious *new Jeruſa-'lem*, the Gates of Pearl, the Foundations of 'Pearl, the Streets and Pavement of tranſpa-'rent Gold. That Sun, which lighteth all this 'World, will be uſeleſs there; even thyſelf 'ſhalt be as bright as yonder ſhining Sun; God 'will be the Sun, and Chriſt the Light, and 'in his Light ſhalt thou have Light.'

§ 9. 'O my Soul! doſt thou *ſtagger at the 'Promiſe of God through Unbelief?* I much ſuſ-'pect thee. Didſt thou believe indeed, thou

'wouldſt

'wouldſt be more affected with it. Is it not 'under the Hand, and Seal, and Oath of God? 'Can God lie? Can He that is Truth itſelf be 'falſe? What need hath God to flatter or de-'ceive thee? Why ſhould he promiſe thee 'more than He will perform? Dare not to 'charge the wiſe, almighty, faithful God with 'this. How many of the Promiſes have been 'performed to thee in thy Converſion? Would 'God ſo powerfully concur with a feigned 'Word? O wretched Heart of Unbelief! Hath 'God made thee a Promiſe of *Reſt*, and wilt 'thou come ſhort of it? Thine Eyes, thy Ears, 'and all thy Senſes, may prove Deluſions, ſoo-'ner than a Promiſe of God can delude thee. 'Thou mayſt be ſurer of that which is written 'in the Word, than if thou ſee it with thine 'Eyes, or feel it with thine Hands. Art thou 'ſure thou art alive, or that this is Earth thou 'ſtandeſt on, or that thine Eyes ſee the Sun? 'As ſure is all this Glory to the *Saints*; as ſure 'ſhall I be higher than yonder Stars, and live 'for ever in the *holy City*, and joyfully ſound 'forth the Praiſe of my Redeemer; if I be not 'ſhut out by this *evil Heart of Unbelief*, cau-'ſing me to *depart from the living God*.'

§ 10. 'AND is this *Reſt* ſo ſweet, and ſo 'ſure? Then what means the careleſs World? 'Know they what they neglect? Did they ever 'hear of it, or are they yet aſleep, or are they 'dead? Do they certainly know that the Crown 'is before them, while they thus ſit ſtill, or

'follow Trifles? Undoubtedly they are beſide 'themſelves, to mind ſo much their Proviſion 'by the Way, when they are haſting ſo faſt to 'another World, and their eternal Happineſs 'lies at ſtake. Were there left one Spark of '*Reaſon*, they would never ſell their *Reſt* for 'Toil, nor their Glory for worldly Vanities, 'nor venture *Heaven* for ſinful Pleaſure. *Poor* '*Men!* O that you would once conſider what 'you hazard, and then you would ſcorn theſe 'tempting Baits! Bleſſed for ever be that Love, 'which hath reſcued me from this bewitching 'Darkneſs!'

§ 11. 'DRAW yet nearer, O my Soul! with 'thy moſt fervent *Love*. Here is Matter for it 'to work upon, ſomething worth thy loving. 'O ſee what *Beauty* preſents itſelf! Is not 'all the Beauty in the World united here! Is 'not all other Beauty but Deformity? Doſt 'thou now need to be perſuaded to love? Here 'is a *Feaſt* for thine Eyes, and all the Powers 'of thy Soul; doſt thou need Entreaties to feed 'upon it? Canſt thou love a little ſhining Earth, 'a walking Piece of Clay? And canſt thou not 'love that *God*, that *Chriſt*, that *Glory*, which 'is ſo truly and unmeaſurably lovely? Thou 'canſt love thy *Friend*, becauſe he loves thee; 'and is the Love of a Friend like the Love of 'Chriſt? Their weeping or bleeding for thee 'do not eaſe thee, nor ſtay the Courſe of thy 'Tears or Blood: But the Tears and Blood that 'fell from thy Lord, have a ſovereign healing

'Virtue.

'Virtue.——O my Soul! if Love *deſerves*, and 'ſhould beget Love, what incomprehenſible 'Love is here before thee? Pour out all the 'Store of thy Affections here, and all is too 'little. O that it were more! O that it were 'many thouſand Times more! Let Him be 'firſt ſerved, that ſerved thee firſt. Let Him 'have the Firſt-born, and Strength of thy Soul, 'who parted with Strength and Life in love for 'thee.——O my Soul! Doſt thou love for '*Excellency?* Yonder is the Region of Light; 'this is a Land of Darkneſs. Yonder twink-'ling *Stars*, that ſhining *Moon*, and radiant '*Sun*, are all but Lanthorns hung out of thy 'Father's Houſe, to light thee while thou 'walkeſt in this dark World: But how little 'doſt thou know the Glory and Bleſſedneſs that 'is within?——Doſt thou love for *Suitable-'neſs?* What Perſon more ſuitable than Chriſt? 'His *Godhead* and *Humanity*, his *Fulneſs* and '*Freeneſs*, his *Willingneſs* and *Conſtancy*, all 'proclaim Him thy ſuitable Friend. What 'State more ſuitable to thy Miſery, than Mer-'cy? Or to thy Sin and Pollution, than Ho-'nour and Perfection? What Place more ſui-'table to thee than Heaven? Does this World 'agree with thy Deſires? Haſt thou not had 'a ſufficient Trial of it? — Or doſt thou love 'for *Intereſt* and *near Relation?* Where haſt 'thou better Intereſt than in Heaven, or nearer 'Relation than there?'

§ 12.

§ 12.—— 'Dost thou love for *Acquaintance* and *Familiarity?* Tho' thine Eyes have never ſeen thy Lord, yet thou haſt heard his Voice, received his Benefits, and lived in his Boſom; He taught thee to know thyſelf and Him; He opened thee that firſt Window through which thou ſaweſt into Heaven. Haſt thou forgotten ſince thy Heart was careleſs, and He awakened it; hard, and He ſoftened it; ſtubborn, and He made it yield; at Peace, and He troubled it; whole, and He broke it; and broken, till He healed it again? Haſt thou forgotten the Times, when He found thee in Tears; when He heard thy ſecret Sighs and Groans, and left all to come and comfort thee; when He took thee, as it were, in his Arms, and asked thee, "*Poor Soul*, what ails thee? Doſt thou weep, "when I have wept ſo much? Be of good "Chear; thy Wounds are ſaving, and not "deadly; it is I have made them, who mean "thee no Hurt; tho' I let out thy Blood, I "I will not let out thy Life.' I remember his Voice. How gently did He take me up? How carefully did He dreſs my Wounds? Methinks I hear Him ſtill ſaying to me, "*Poor Sinner*, tho' thou haſt dealt unkindly "with me, and caſt me off; yet I will not do "ſo by thee. Tho' thou haſt ſet light by me "and all my Mercies, yet they and myſelf are "All thine. What wouldſt thou have, that I "can give thee? And what doſt thou want,

"that

" that I cannot give thee? If any Thing I
" have will pleaſure thee, thou ſhalt have it.
" Wouldſt thou have Pardon? I freely for-
" give thee all thy Debt. Wouldſt thou have
" Grace and Peace? Thou ſhalt have them
" both. Wouldſt thou have Myſelf? Behold
" I am thine, thy *Friend*, thy *Lord*, thy *Bro-*
" *ther*, *Husband*, and *Head*. Wouldſt thou
" have the Father? I will bring thee to Him,
" and thou ſhalt have Him, in and by Me.'
' Theſe were my Lord's reviving Words. Af-
' ter all, when I was doubtful of his Love, me-
' thinks I yet remember his overcoming Argu-
' ments. ' Have I done ſo much, *Sinner*, to
" teſtify my Love, and yet doſt thou doubt?
" Have I offered thee Myſelf and Love ſo long,
" and yet doſt thou queſtion my Willingneſs
" to be thine? At what dearer Rate ſhould I
" tell thee that I love thee? Wilt thou not be-
" lieve my *bitter Paſſion* proceeded from Love?
" Have I made Myſelf in the Goſpel a Lion
" to thine Enemies, and a Lamb to thee, and
" doſt thou overlook my Lamb-like Nature?
" Had I been willing to let thee periſh, what
" need I have done and ſuffered ſo much?
" What need I follow thee with ſuch Patience
" and Importunity? Why doſt thou tell me of
" thy Wants; have I not enough for Me and
" thee? Or of thy Unworthineſs; for if thou
" waſt thyſelf worthy, what ſhouldſt thou do
" with my Worthineſs? Did I ever invite, or
" ſave, the *Worthy* and the *Righteous*; or is

" there

" there any ſuch *upon Earth?* Haſt thou no-
" thing; art thou loſt and miſerable, helpleſs
" and forlorn? Doſt thou believe I am an All-
" ſufficient Saviour, and wouldſt thou have
" me? Lo, I am thine, take me; if thou art
" willing, I am; and neither Sin, nor Satan,
" ſhall break the Match.' Theſe, O theſe,
' were the bleſſed Words which his Spirit
' from his Goſpel ſpoke unto me, till He
' made me caſt myſelf at his Feet, and cry
' out, ' My Saviour, and my Lord, thou haſt
" broke, thou haſt revived my Heart; thou
" haſt overcome, thou haſt won my Heart;
" take it, it is thine; if ſuch a Heart can
" pleaſe thee, take it; ~~if it~~ cannot, make it
" ſuch as thou wouldſt have it.' Thus, O my
' Soul, mayſt thou remember the ſweet Fa-
' miliarity thou haſt had with Chriſt; there-
' fore, if Acquaintance will cauſe Affection,
' let out thy Heart unto Him. It is He hath
' ſtood by thy Bed of Sickneſs, hath eaſed thy
' Pains, refreſhed thy Wearineſs, and remo-
' ved thy Fears. He hath been always ready,
' when thou haſt earneſtly ſought Him; hath
' met thee in publick and private; hath been
' found of thee in the Congregation, in thy
' Houſe, in thy Cloſet, in the Field, in thy
' waking Nights, in thy deepeſt Dangers.'

§ 13. ' If *Bounty* and *Compaſſion* be an At-
' tractive of Love, how unmeaſurably then am
' I bound to love Him? All the Mercies that
' have filled up my Life, all the Places that

' ever

'ever I abode in, all the Societies and Perſons
'I have been converſant with, all my Employ-
'ments and Relations, every Condition I have
'been in, and every Change I have paſſed thro',
'all tell me, that the Fountain is *overflowing*
'*Goodneſs*. Lord, what a Sum of Love am I
'indebted to thee? And how does my Debt
'continually increaſe? How ſhould I love again
'for ſo much Love? But ſhall I dare to think
'of requiting thee, or of recompenſing all thy
'Love with mine? Will my Mite requite thee
'for thy golden Mines; my ſeldom Wiſhes,
'for thy conſtant Bounty; mine which is no-
'thing, or not mine, for thine which is in-
'finite and thine own? Shall I dare to contend
'in Love with thee; or ſet my borrowed lan-
'guid Spark againſt the Sun of Love? Can I
'love as high, as deep, as broad, as long, as
'Love itſelf; as much as He that made me,
'and that made me love, and gave me all that
'little which I have? As I cannot match thee
'in the Works of Power, nor make, nor pre-
'ſerve, nor rule the Worlds; no more can I
'match thee in Love. No, Lord, I yield; I
'am overcome. O bleſſed Conqueſt! Go on
'victoriouſly, and ſtill prevail, and triumph in
'thy Love. The Captive of Love ſhall pro-
'claim thy Victory; when thou leadeſt me in
'Triumph from Earth to Heaven, from Death
'to Life, from the Tribunal to the Throne;
'myſelf, and all that ſee it, ſhall acknowledge
'thou haſt prevailed, and all ſhall ſay, *Behold*

'*how*

'*how He loved him!* Yet let me love in Sub-
'jection to thy Love; as thy redeemed Cap-
'tive, tho' not thy Peer. Shall I not love at
'all, becauſe I cannot reach thy Meaſure?
'O that I could feelingly ſay, *I love thee*, even
'as I love my Friend, and myſelf! Though I
'cannot ſay, as the *Apoſtle, Thou knoweſt that*
'*I love thee*; yet I can ſay, Lord, thou know-
'eſt that I would love thee. I am angry with
'my Heart, that it doth not love thee; I chide
'it, yet it doth not mend; I reaſon with it,
'and would fain perſuade it, yet I do not per-
'ceive it ſtir; I rub and chafe it in the Uſe of
'thy Ordinances, and yet I feel it not warm
'within me. Unworthy Soul! Is not thine
'Eye now upon the only lovely Object? Art
'thou not beholding the raviſhing Glory of the
'Saints? And doſt thou not love? Art thou not
'a rational Soul, and ſhould not Reaſon tell
'thee, that Earth is a Dungeon to the celeſtial
'Glory? Art thou not thyſelf a Spirit, and
'ſhouldſt thou not love God, *who is a Spirit,*
'*and the Father of Spirits?* Why doſt thou
'love ſo much thy periſhing Clay, and love
'no more the heavenly Glory? Shalt thou love
'when thou comeſt there; when the Lord
'ſhall take thy Careaſe from the Grave, and
'make thee ſhine as the Sun in Glory for ever
'and ever; ſhalt thou then love, or ſhalt thou
'not? Is not the Place a Meeting of Lo-
'vers? Is not the Life a State of Love? Is it
'not the great Marriage-Day of the Lamb? Is

'not

'not the Employment there the Work of Love, 'where the Souls with Chriſt take their Fill? 'O then, my Soul, begin it here! Be *ſick of* 'Love now, that thou mayſt be well with Love 'there. *Keep thyſelf* now *in the Love of God*; 'and let *neither Life, nor Death, nor any Thing* '*ſeparate thee from it*; and thou ſhalt be kept 'in the Fulneſs of Love for ever, and nothing 'ſhall imbitter or abate thy Pleaſure; for the 'Lord hath prepared a City of Love, a Place 'for communicating Love to his choſen, *and* '*they that love his Name ſhall dwell therein.*'

§ 14. 'AWAKE then, O my drowſy Soul! 'To ſleep under the Light of Grace is unrea-'ſonable, much more in the Approach of the 'Light of Glory. Come forth, my dull con-'gealed Spirit, thy Lord bids thee *rejoice, and* '*again rejoice.* Thou haſt lain long enough 'in thy Priſon of Fleſh, where Satan hath been 'thy Jailor, Cares have been thy Irons, Fears 'thy Scourges, and thy Food the Bread and 'Water of Affliction; where Sorrows have 'been thy Lodging, and thy Sins and Foes 'have made the Bed, and an unbelieving Heart 'hath been the Gates and Bars that have kept 'thee in: The Angel of the Covenant now 'calls thee, and ſtrikes thee, and bids thee, '*ariſe and follow him.* Up, O my Soul! and 'chearfully obey, and thy Bolts and Bars ſhall 'all fly open; *follow the Lamb whitherſoever He* '*goeth.* Shouldſt thou fear to follow ſuch a 'Guide? Can the Sun lead thee to a State of

'Dark-

'Darkneſs? Will He lead thee to Death, who 'died to ſave thee from it? Follow Him, and 'He will ſhew thee *the Paradiſe of God*; He 'will give thee a Sight of the *new Jeruſalem*, 'and a Taſte of *the Tree of Life*. Come forth, 'my drooping Soul, and lay aſide thy Winter-'Dreſs; let it be ſeen by thy *Garments of Joy* '*and Praiſe*, that the Spring is come; and as 'thou now ſeeſt thy Comforts green, thou ſhalt 'ſhortly ſee them *white and ripe for Harveſt*, 'and then thou ſhalt be called to reap, and ga-'ther, and take Poſſeſſion. Should I ſuſpend 'and delay my Joys till then? Should not the 'Joys of the Spring go before the Joys of Har-'veſt? Is Title nothing before Poſſeſſion? Is 'the Heir in no better a State than a Slave? My 'Lord hath taught me to *rejoice in Hope of* '*his Glory*; and how to ſee it through the 'Bars of a Priſon; for *when I am perſecuted for* '*Righteouſneſs Sake*, He commands me to *re-*'*joice, and be exceeding glad*, becauſe *my Re-*'*ward in Heaven is great*. I know He would 'have my Joys exceed my Sorrows; and as 'much as He delights in *the Humble and Con-*'*trite*, He yet more delights in the Soul that '*delights in Him*. Hath my Lord ſpread me 'a Table in this Wilderneſs, and furniſhed it 'with the Promiſes of everlaſting Glory, and 'ſet before me Angels Food? Doth He fre-'quently and importunately invite me to ſit 'down, and feed, and ſpare not? Hath He, 'to that End, furniſhed me with Reaſon, and

'Faith,

'Faith, and a joyful Diſpoſition; and is it poſ-
'ſible that He ſhould be unwilling to have me
'rejoice? Is it not his Command, to *delight thy-*
'*ſelf in the Lord*; and his Promiſe, to *give thee*
'*the Deſires of thine Heart?* Art thou not char-
'ged, to *rejoice evermore*; yea, to *ſing aloud, and*
'*ſhout for Joy?* Why ſhould I then be diſcoura-
'ged? My God is willing, if I were but willing.
'He is delighted in my Delights. He would
'have it my conſtant Frame, and daily Buſi-
'neſs, to be near Him in my believing *Medi-*
'*tations*, and to live in the ſweeteſt Thoughts
'of his Goodneſs. O bleſſed Employment, fit
'for the Sons of God! But thy Feaſt, my Lord,
'is nothing to me without an Appetite: Thou
'haſt ſet the Dainties of Heaven before me;
'but, alas! I am blind, and cannot ſee them;
'I am ſick, and cannot reliſh them; I am ſo
'benumbed, that I cannot put forth a Hand to
'take them. I therefore humbly beg this Grace,
'that as thou haſt opened Heaven to me in
'thy Word, ſo thou wouldſt *open mine Eyes to*
'*ſee* it, and my Heart to delight in it; elſe
'Heaven will be no Heaven to me. O thou Spi-
'rit of Life, breathe upon thy Graces in me;
'take me by the Hand, and lift me from Earth,
'that I may ſee what Glory *thou haſt prepared*
'*for them that love thee!*'

§ 15. 'AWAY then, ye Soul-tormenting
'Cares and Fears, ye Heart-vexing Sorrows:
'At leaſt forbear a little while; ſtand by; ſtay
'here below, till I go up, and ſee my *Reſt.*

'The Way is ſtrange to me, but not to Chriſt. 'There was the eternal Abode of his glorious 'Deity; and thither hath He alſo brought his 'glorified Fleſh. It was his Work to purchaſe it; 'it is his to prepare it, and prepare me for it, 'and bring me to it. The eternal God of Truth 'hath given me his Promiſe, his Seal and Oath, '*that, believing in Chriſt, I ſhall not periſh, but* '*have everlaſting Life*. Thither ſhall my Soul be 'ſpeedily removed, and my Body very ſhortly 'follow. And can my Tongue ſay, that I ſhall 'ſhortly and ſurely live with God; and yet my 'Heart not leap within me? Can I ſay it with 'Faith, and not with Joy? Ah Faith, how 'ſenſibly do I now perceive thy Weakneſs! 'But tho' Unbelief darken my Light, and dull 'my Life, and ſuppreſs my Joys, it ſhall not 'be able to conquer and deſtroy me; tho' it 'envy all my Comforts, yet ſome in ſpight of 'it I ſhall even here receive; and if that did 'not hinder, what Abundance might I have? 'The Light of Heaven would ſhine into my 'Heart; and I might be almoſt as familiar 'there, as I am on Earth. Come away then, 'my Soul; ſtop thine Ears to the ignorant 'Language of Infidelity; thou art able to an-'ſwer all its Arguments; or if thou art not, 'yet tread them under thy Feet. Come away; 'ſtand not looking on that Grave, nor turning 'thoſe Bones, nor reading thy Leſſon now in 'the Duſt; thoſe Lines will ſoon be wiped 'out. But lift up thy Head, and look to Hea-

'ven,

'ven, and ſee thy *Name* in golden Letters
'*written before the Foundation of the World, in*
'*the Book of Life of the Lamb that was ſlain.*
'What if an Angel ſhould tell thee, that there
'is a Manſion in Heaven prepared for thee, that
'it ſhall certainly be thine for ever; would not
'ſuch a Meſſage make thee glad? And doſt
'thou make light of the infallible Word of
'Promiſe, which was delivered by the Spirit,
'and even by the Son Himſelf? Suppoſe thou
'hadſt ſeen *a fiery Chariot* come for thee, and
'fetch thee up to Heaven, like *Elijah*; would
'not this rejoice thee? but thy Lord aſſures
'thee, that the Soul of a *Lazarus* hath a Con-
'voy of *Angels* to *carry* it *into Abraham's Bo-*
'*ſom.* Shall a Drunkard be ſo merry among
'his Cups, or the Glutton in his delicious Fare,
'and ſhall not I rejoice who muſt ſhortly be in
'Heaven? Can Meat and Drink delight me
'when I hunger and thirſt; can I find Plea-
'ſure in Walks, and Gardens, and convenient
'Dwellings; can beautiful Objects delight mine
'Eyes; or grateful Odours my Smell; or Melo-
'dy my Ears; and ſhall not the Fore-thought of
'celeſtial Bliſs delight me? Methinks among my
'Books I could employ myſelf in ſweet Content,
'and bid the World farewel, and pity the Rich
'and Great that know not this Happineſs;
'what then will my Happineſs in Heaven be,
'where my Knowledge will be perfect? If *the*
'*Queen of Sheba came from the utmoſt Parts of the*
'*Earth to hear the Wiſdom of Solomon,* and ſee

'his Glory; how chearfully ſhould I paſs from
'Earth to Heaven, to ſee the Glory of the
'eternal Majeſty, and attain the Height of
'Wiſdom; compared with which, the moſt
'Learned on Earth are but Fools and Idiots?
'What if God had made me Commander of
'the Earth; what if I could *remove Mountains*,
'*heal Diſeaſes with a Word or a Touch*, or *caſt*
'*out Devils*; ſhould I not rejoice in ſuch Pri-
'vileges and Honours as theſe; and ſhall I not
'much more *rejoice that* my Name is written
'in Heaven? I cannot here enjoy my Parents,
'or my near and beloved Friends, without ſome
'Delight; eſpecially when I did freely let out
'my Affection to my Friend, how ſweet was
'that Exerciſe of my Love! O what will it
'then be to live in the perpetual Love of God!
'*For Brethren to dwell together in Unity* here,
'*how good and how pleaſant is it!* To ſee a Fa-
'mily live in Love, Husband and Wife, Pa-
'rents, Children and Servants, doing all in
'Love to one another; to ſee a Town live to-
'gether in Love, without any Envyings, Braw-
'lings or Contentions, Law-Suits, Factions or
'Diviſions, but every Man loving his Neigh-
'bour as himſelf, thinking they can never do
'too much for one another, but ſtriving to go
'beyond each other in Love; how happy, how
'delightful a Sight is this! O then, what a
'bleſſed Society will the Family of Heaven be,
'and thoſe peaceful Inhabitants of the *new*
'*Jeruſalem*, where there is no Diviſion, nor dif-

'fering

'fering Judgments, no Diſaffection nor Strange-
'neſs, no deceitful Friendſhip, no, not one un-
'kind Expreſſion, nor any angry Look or
'Thought; but *all are one in Chriſt*, who is
'one with the Father, and all live in the Love
'of Him, who is Love itſelf! The Soul is not
'more where it lives, than where it loves. How
'near then will my Soul be united to God,
'when I ſhall ſo heartily, ſtrongly, and inceſ-
'ſantly love Him! Ah, wretched, unbelieving
'Heart, that can think of ſuch a Day, and
'Work, and Life as this, with ſuch low and
'feeble Joys! But my future enjoying Joys will
'be more lively.'

§ 16. 'How delightful is it to me to be-
'hold and ſtudy theſe inferior *Works of Crea-*
'tion? What a beautiful Fabrick do we here
'dwell in; the Floor ſo dreſs'd with Herbs,
'and Flowers, and Trees, and watered with
'Springs and Rivers; the Roof ſo wide ex-
'panded, ſo admirably adorned! What Won-
'ders do Sun, Moon, and Stars, Seas, and
'Winds, contain! And hath God prepared
'ſuch a Houſe for corruptible Fleſh, for a Soul
'impriſoned; and doth He beſtow ſo many
'Millions of Wonders upon his Enemies! O
'what a Dwelling muſt that be, which he pre-
'pares for his dearly beloved Children; and
'how will the Glory of the *new Jeruſalem* ex-
'ceed all the preſent Glory of the Creatures?
'Ariſe then, O my Soul, in thy Contempla-
'tion; and let thy Thoughts of that Glory

'as far exceed in Sweetneſs thy Thoughts of 'the Excellencies below! Fear not to go out 'of this Body, and this World, when thou 'muſt make ſo happy a Change; but ſay, as '*one* did when he was dying, 'I am glad, and "even leap for Joy, that the Time is come in "which that mighty *Jehovah*, whoſe Majeſty in "my Search of Nature I have admired, whoſe "Goodneſs I have adored, whom by Faith I "have deſired and panted after, will now ſhew "Himſelf to me Face to Face."

§ 17. 'How wonderful alſo are the *Works* '*of Providence?* How delightful to ſee the 'Great God intereſt Himſelf in the Safety and 'Advancement of a few humble, praying, but 'deſpiſed Perſons; and to review thoſe ſpecial 'Mercies with which my own Life hath been 'adorned and ſweetened? How often have my 'Prayers been heard, my Tears regarded, my 'troubled Soul relieved? How often hath my 'Lord bid me *be of good Chear?* What a Sup-'port are theſe Experiences, theſe clear Teſti-'monies of my Father's Love, to my fearful 'unbelieving Heart? O then, what a bleſſed 'Day will that be, when I ſhall have all Mer-'cy, Perfection of Mercy, and fully enjoy the 'Lord of Mercy; when I ſhall ſtand on the 'Shore, and look back on the raging Seas I 'have ſafely paſſed; when I ſhall review my 'Pains and Sorrows, my Fears and Tears, and 'poſſeſs the Glory which was the End of 'all? If one Drop of lively Faith was mixed

'with

'with theſe Conſiderations, what a Heaven-
'raviſhing Heart ſhould I carry within me?
'Fain would *I believe, Lord, help my Unbelief.*'

§ 18. 'How ſweet, O my Soul, have *Ordi-*
'*nances* been to thee? What Delight haſt thou
'had in Prayer, and Thankſgiving, under hea-
'venly Sermons, and in the Society of Saints,
'and to ſee *the Lord adding to the Church ſuch*
'*as ſhould be ſaved?* How can my Heart then
'conceive the Joy, which I ſhall have to ſee
'the perfected Church in Heaven, and to be
'admitted into the celeſtial Temple, and with
'the heavenly Hoſt praiſe the Lord for ever? If
'the *Word of God* was ſweeter to *Job* than *his*
'*neceſſary Food*; and to *David, than Honey and*
'the *Honey-Comb*; and *was the Joy and re-*
'*joicing of Jeremiah's Heart*; how bleſſed a
'Day will that be, when we fully enjoy the
'Lord of this Word, and ſhall no more need
'theſe written Precepts and Promiſes, nor read
'any Book but the Face of the glorious God?
'If they that heard Chriſt ſpeak on Earth, *were*
'*aſtoniſhed at his Wiſdom and Anſwers*, and *won-*
'*dered at the gracious Words which proceeded*
'*out of his Mouth*; how ſhall I then be af-
'fected to behold Him in his Majeſty?'

§ 19. 'CAN the Proſpect of this Glory
'make others *welcome the Croſs*, and even re-
'fuſe Deliverance; and cannot it make thee
'chearful under leſſer Sufferings? Can it ſwee-
'ten the Flames of Martyrdom; and not ſwee-
'ten thy Life, or thy Sickneſs, or thy natural

'Death? Is it not the ſame Heaven which they
'and I muſt live in? Is not their God, their
'Chriſt, their Crown, and mine the ſame?
'And ſhall I look upon it with an Eye ſo dim,
'a Heart ſo dull, a Countenance ſo dejected?
'Some ſmall Foretaſtes of it have I myſelf had;
'and how much more delightful have they
'been, than any earthly Things ever were;
'and what then will the full Enjoyment be?'

§ 20. 'WHAT a Beauty is there here in the
'*imperfect Graces of the Spirit?* Alas! how
'ſmall are theſe, to what we ſhall enjoy in our
'perfect State? What a happy Life ſhould I
'here live, could I but love God as much as I
'would; could I be all Love, and always lo-
'ving? O my Soul! what wouldſt thou give
'for ſuch a Life? Had I ſuch Apprehenſions
'of God, ſuch Knowledge of his Word as I de-
'ſire; could I fully truſt Him in all my Straits;
'could I be as lively as I would in every Duty;
'could I make God my conſtant Deſire and
'Delight; I would not envy the World their
'Honours or Pleaſures. What a bleſſed State,
'O my Soul! wilt thou ſhortly be in, when
'thou ſhalt have far more of theſe than thou
'canſt now deſire, and ſhalt exerciſe thy per-
'fected Graces in the immediate Viſion of God,
'and not in the Dark, and at a Diſtance as
'now?'

§ 21. 'Is the ſinning, afflicted, perſecuted
'*Church of Chriſt*, ſo much more excellent than
'any particular gracious Soul? What then will

'the

'the Church be, when it is fully gathered 'and glorified; when it is aſcended from the 'Valley of Tears to *Mount Sion*; when it ſhall 'ſin and ſuffer no more! The Glory of the 'old *Jeruſalem* will be Darkneſs and Deformity 'to the Glory of the *new*. What Cauſe ſhall 'we have then to ſhout for Joy, when we ſhall 'ſee how glorious the heavenly Temple is, and 'remember the Meanneſs of the Church on 'Earth?'

[N. B. *If this Chapter ſeem too long to be read at once, it may be properly divided here.*]

§ 22. 'But alas! what a Loſs am I at in 'the Midſt of my *Contemplations?* I thought 'my *Heart* had all the while attended, but I 'ſee it doth not. What Life is there in empty 'Thoughts and Words, without Affections? 'Neither God, nor I, find Pleaſure in them. 'Where haſt thou been, *unworthy Heart*, while 'I was opening to thee the everlaſting Treaſures? 'Art thou not aſhamed to complain ſo much 'of an uncomfortable Life, and to murmur at 'God for filling thee with Sorrows; when He 'in vain offers thee the Delights of Angels? 'Hadſt thou now but followed me cloſe, it 'would have made thee revive and leap for 'Joy, and forget thy Pains and Sorrows. Did I 'think my Heart had been ſo backward to 'rejoice?'

§ 23 'Lord, thou haſt reſerved my perfect 'Joys for Heaven, therefore, help me to *de-*

'*ſire*

'*fire* till I may poſſeſs, and let me long, when 'I cannot, as I would, rejoice. O my Soul, 'thou knoweſt to thy Sorrow, that thou art 'not yet at thy *Reſt*. When ſhall I arrive at 'that ſafe and quiet Harbour, where there are 'none of theſe Storms, Waves, and Dangers; 'when I ſhall never more have a weary reſtleſs 'Night or Day! Then my Life will not be ſuch 'a Mixture of Hope and Fear, of Joy and Sor-'row; nor ſhall Fleſh and Spirit be combating 'within me; nor Faith and Unbelief, Humi-'lity and Pride, maintain a continual Conflict. 'O when ſhall I be paſt theſe Soul-tormenting 'Fears, and Cares, and Griefs? When ſhall I 'be out of this Soul-contradicting, enſnaring, 'deceitful Fleſh; this corruptible Body, this 'vain vexatious World! Alas, that I muſt ſtand 'and ſee the Church and Cauſe of Chriſt toſs'd 'about in Contention, and made ſubſervient to 'private Intereſts, or deluded Fancies! There 'is none of this Diſorder in the heavenly *Jeru-'ſalem*; there I ſhall find an harmonious Con-'ſent of perfected Spirits, in obeying and prai-'ſing their everlaſting King. O how much 'better to be *a Door-Keeper* there, than the 'Commander of this tumultuous World? Why 'am I no more weary of this Wearineſs? Why 'do I ſo forget my *reſting Place?* Up then, 'O my Soul, in thy moſt raiſed and fervent '*Deſires!* Stay not till this Fleſh can deſire 'with thee; expect not that Senſe ſhould ap-'prehend thy bleſſed Object, and tell thee

'when

'when and what to desire. Doth not the Dul-
'neſs of thy Desires after *Reſt*, accuſe thee of
'moſt deteſtable Ingratitude and Folly? Muſt
'thy Lord procure thee a *Reſt* at ſo dear a Rate,
'and doſt thou no more value it? Muſt He go
'before to prepare ſo glorious a Manſion for
'ſuch a Wretch, and art thou loth to go and
'poſſeſs it? Shall the Lord of Glory be deſi-
'rous of thy Company, and thou not deſi-
'rous of his? Muſt Earth become a very Hell
'to thee, before thou art willing to be with
'God? Behold the moſt lovely Creature, or
'the moſt deſirable State, and tell me, where
'wouldſt thou be, if not with God? Poverty
'is a Burthen; Riches a Snare; Sickneſs un-
'pleaſing; Health unſafe; the frowning World
'*bruiſes thy Heel*; the ſmiling World *ſtings*
'thee to the Heart; ſo much as the World is
'loved and delighted in, it hurts and endan-
'gers the Lover; and if it may not be loved,
'why ſhould it be deſired? If thou art ap-
'plauded, it proves the moſt contagious Breath;
'if thou art vilify'd, or unkindly uſed, me-
'thinks this ſhould not entice thy Love. If
'thy ſucceſsful Labours, and thy godly Friends,
'ſeem better to thee than a Life with God, it
'is Time for God to take them from thee. If
'thy Studies have been ſweet, have they not
'alſo been bitter? And at beſt, what are they
'to the everlaſting Views of the God of Truth?
'Thy Friends here have been thy Delight;
'and have they not alſo been thy Vexation and
'Grief? They are gracious, and are they not

'alſo

'alſo ſinful? They are kind, and are they not 'ſoon diſpleaſed? They are humble, but, alas, 'how proud alſo? Their Graces are ſweet, and 'their Gifts helpful; but are not their Cor-'ruptions bitter, and their Imperfections hurt-'ful? And art thou ſo loth to go from them to 'thy God?'

§ 24. 'O MY Soul, look above this World 'of Sorrows! Haſt thou ſo long felt the ſmar-'ting Rod of Affliction, and no better under-'ſtood its Meaning? Is not every Stroke to drive 'thee hence? Is not its Voice like that to *Eli-'jah, what doſt thou here?* Doſt thou forget 'thy Lord's Prediction, *In the World ye ſhall 'have Tribulation, in me ye may have Peace.* 'Ah! my dear Lord, I feel thy Meaning; it 'is written in my Fleſh, engraved in my Bones. 'My Heart thou aimeſt at; thy Rod drives, 'thy ſilken Cord of Love draws; and all to 'bring it to thyſelf. Lord, can ſuch a Heart 'be worth thy having? Make it worthy, and 'then it is thine; take it to thyſelf, and then 'take me. This Clod hath Life to ſtir, but 'not to riſe. As the feeble Child to the ten-'der Mother, it looketh up to thee, and ſtretch-'eth out the Hands, and fain would have thee 'take it up. Tho' I cannot ſay, *my Soul long-'eth after thee*; yet I can ſay, I long for ſuch 'a longing Heart. *The Spirit is willing, the 'Fleſh is weak.* My Spirit cries, *let thy King-'dom come*, or let me come to thy Kingdom; 'but the Fleſh is afraid thou ſhouldſt hear my

'Prayer,

'Prayer, and take me at my Word. O bleſſed 'be thy Grace, which makes Uſe of my Cor-'ruptions to kill themſelves; for I fear my 'Fears, and ſorrow for my Sorrows, and long 'for greater Longings; and thus the painful 'Means of attaining my Deſires increaſe my 'Wearineſs, and that makes me groan to be 'at *Reſt.*'

§ 25, 'INDEED, Lord, my Soul itſelf is *in a* 'Strait, and *what to chuſe I know not*; but 'thou knoweſt what to give. *To depart, and* 'be with thee, *is far better.* But *to abide in the* 'Fleſh ſeems *needful.* Thou knoweſt I am not 'weary of thy Work, but of Sorrow and Sin; 'I am willing to ſtay while thou wilt employ 'me, and diſpatch the Work thou haſt put in-'to my Hands: But, I beſeech thee, ſtay no 'longer when this is done; and while I muſt 'be here, let me be ſtill amending and aſcen-'ding; make me ſtill better, and take me at 'the beſt. I dare not be ſo impatient, as to 'importune thee to cut off my Time, and 'ſnatch me hence unready; becauſe I know 'my everlaſting State ſo much depends on the 'Improvement of this Life. Nor would I ſtay 'when my Work is done; and remain here 'ſinning, while my Brethren are triumphing. 'Thy Footſteps bruiſe this Worm, while thoſe 'Stars ſhine in the Firmament of Glory. Yet 'I am thy Child as well as they; Chriſt is my 'Head as well as theirs; why is there then ſo 'great a Diſtance? But I acknowledge the

'Equity

'Equity of thy Ways; though we are all Children, yet I am the Prodigal, and therefore more fit in this remote Country to *feed on Husks*, while they are *always with thee*, and poſſeſs thy Glory. They were once themſelves in my Condition, and I ſhall ſhortly be in theirs. They were of the loweſt Form, before they came to the higheſt; they *ſuffered*, before they *reigned*; they *came out of great Tribulation, who are* now *before thy Throne*; and ſhall not I be content to come to the Crown as they did; and to *drink of their Cup*, before I *ſit with them in the Kingdom?* Lord I am content to ſtay thy Time, and go thy Way, ſo thou wilt exalt me alſo in thy Seaſon, and take me *into thy Barn* when thou ſeeſt me ripe. In the mean Time I may deſire, tho' I am not to repine; I may believe and wiſh, tho' not make any ſinful Haſte: I am willing to wait for thee, but not to loſe thee; and when thou ſeeſt me too contented with thine Abſence, then quicken my languid Deſires, and blow up the dying Spark of Love; and leave me not till I am able unfeignedly to cry out, *As the Hart panteth after the Water-Brooks, ſo panteth my Soul after thee, O God. My Soul thirſteth for God, for the living God; when ſhall I come and appear before God? My Converſation is in Heaven, from whence I look for a Saviour. My Affections are ſet on Things above, where Chriſt ſitteth, and my Life is hid. I walk by Faith,*

'*and*

'*and not by Sight*; *willing rather to be abſent* '*from the Body, and preſent with the Lord.*'

§ 26. 'WHAT Intereſt hath this empty 'World in me; and what is there in it that 'may ſeem ſo lovely, as to entice my *Deſires* 'from my God, or make me loth to come a-'way? Methinks, when I look upon it with a 'deliberate Eye, it is a howling Wilderneſs, 'and too many of its Inhabitants are untamed 'Monſters. I can view all its Beauty as De-'formity; and drown all its Pleaſures in a few 'penitent Tears; or the Wind of a Sigh will 'ſcatter them away. O let not this Fleſh ſo 'ſeduce my Soul, as to make it prefer this 'weary Life before the Joys that are about thy 'Throne! And though Death itſelf be unwel-'come to Nature, yet let thy Grace make thy 'Glory appear to me ſo deſirable, that the 'King of Terrors may be the Meſſenger of my 'Joy! Let not my Soul be ejected by Vio-'lence, and diſpoſſeſſed of its Habitation againſt 'its Will; but draw it to thyſelf by the ſecret 'Power of thy Love, as the Sun-ſhine in the 'Spring draws forth the Creatures from their 'Winter-Cells; meet it half Way, and entice 'it to thee, as the Load-Stone doth the Iron, 'and as the greater Flame attracts the leſs! 'Diſpel therefore the Clouds that hide thy 'Love from me; or remove the Scales that 'hinder mine Eyes from beholding thee; for 'the Beams that ſtream from thy Face, and the 'Fore-taſtes of thy great Salvation, and nothing

'elſe

'elſe, can make a Soul unfeignedly ſay, *now let thy Servant depart in Peace!* But it is not thy ordinary Diſcoveries that will here ſuffice; as the Work is greater, ſo muſt thy Help be. O turn theſe Fears into ſtrong Deſires, and this Lothneſs to die into Longings after thee! While I muſt be abſent from thee, let my Soul as heartily groan, as my Body doth under its Want of Health! If I have any more Time to ſpend on Earth, let me live, as without the World, in thee, as I have ſometime lived as *without thee in the World!* While I have a Thought to think, let me not forget thee; or a Tongue to move, let me mention thee with Delight; or a Breath to breathe, let it be after thee, or for thee; or a Knee to bend, let it daily bow at thy Footſtool; and when by Sickneſs thou confineſt me, do thou *make my Bed, number my Pains, and put all my Tears into thy Bottle!*'

§ 27. 'As my Fleſh deſired what my Spirit abhorred, ſo now let my Spirit deſire that Day which my Fleſh abhorreth; that my Friends may not with ſo much Sorrow wait for the Departure of my Soul, as my Soul with Joy ſhall wait for its own Departure! Then *let me die the Death of the Righteous, and let my laſt End be like his*; even a Removal to that Glory that ſhall never end! Then let thy Convoy of Angels bring my departing Soul among *the perfected Spirits of the Juſt*, and let me follow my dear Friends that have

'died

'died *in Chriſt before me*; and while my ſor-
'rowing Friends are weeping over my Grave,
'let my Spirit be repoſed with thee in *Reſt*; and
'while my Corps ſhall lie rotting in the Dark,
'let my Soul be in *the Inheritance of the Saints*
'*in Light!* O thou that *numbereſt the very Hairs*
'*of my Head*, number all the Days that my Bo-
'dy lies in the Duſt; and thou, that *writeſt all*
'*my Members in thy Book*, keep an Account of
'my ſcattered Bones! O my Saviour, haſten
'the Time of thy Return; *ſend forth thy An-*
'*gels*, and let that dreadful, joyful *Trumpet*
'*ſound!* Delay not, leſt the Living give up
'their Hopes; delay not, leſt Earth ſhould
'grow like Hell, and thy Church by Diviſion be
'all crumbled to Duſt; delay not, leſt thy Ene-
'mies get Advantage of thy Flock, and leſt
'Pride, Hypocriſy, Senſuality, and Unbelief
'prevail againſt thy *little Remnant*, and ſhare
'among them thy whole Inheritance, and
'*when thou comeſt* thou *find* not *Faith on the*
'*Earth*; delay not, leſt the Grave ſhould boaſt
'of Victory, and having learned Rebellion of
'its Gueſt, ſhould refuſe to deliver thee up thy
'Due! O haſten that great Reſurrection-Day,
'when thy Command ſhall go forth, and none
'diſobey; when the *Sea and Earth ſhall yield*
'*up their* Hoſtages *and all that ſleep in the*
'*Grave ſhall awake, and the Dead in Chriſt ſhall*
'*riſe firſt*; when *the Seed* which thou ſowedſt
'*corruptible*, *ſhall* come forth *incorruptible*; and
'Graves that received Rottenneſs and Duſt,

'ſhall return thee glorious Stars and Suns! 'Therefore dare I lay down my Carcaſe in the 'Duſt, intruſting it, not to a Grave, but to 'thee; and *therefore my Fleſh ſhall reſt in Hope*, 'till thou ſhalt raiſe it to the Poſſeſſion of *ever-* '*laſting Reſt. Return, O Lord how long?* O '*let thy Kingdom come!* Thy deſolate *Bride* '*ſaith, Come*; for thy *Spirit* within her *ſaith*, '*Come*; and teacheth her thus to *pray with* '*Groanings which cannot be uttered*; yea, *the* '*whole Creation* ſaith, Come, *waiting to be de-* '*livered from the Bondage of Corruption, into the* '*glorious Liberty of the Children of God*; thou 'thyſelf haſt *ſaid, Surely I come quickly. Amen.* '*Even ſo, Come, Lord Jeſus!*'

§ 28. THUS, *Reader*, I have given thee my beſt Advice for maintaining a heavenly Converſation. If thou canſt not thus meditate methodically and fully, yet do it as thou canſt; only be ſure to do it ſeriouſly and frequently. Be acquainted with this heavenly Work, and thou wilt, in ſome Degree, be acquainted with God; thy Joys will be ſpiritual, prevalent, and laſting, according to the Nature of their bleſſed Object; thou wilt have Comfort in Life and Death: When thou haſt neither Wealth, nor Health, nor the Pleaſures of this World, yet wilt thou have Comfort: Without the Preſence, or Help of any Friend, without a Miniſter, without a Book, when all Means are denied thee, or taken from thee, yet mayſt thou have vigorous, real Comfort. Thy Graces will be mighty

mighty, active, and victorious; and the daily *Joy* which is thus fetch'd from Heaven *will be thy Strength.* Thou wilt be as one that ſtands on the Top of an exceeding high Mountain; he looks down on the World as if it were quite below him; Fields and Woods, Cities and Towns, ſeem to him but little Spots. Thus deſpicably wilt thou look on all Things here below. The greateſt Princes will ſeem but as Graſhoppers; the buſy, contentious, covetous World, but as a Heap of Ants. Men's Threatenings will be no Terror to thee; nor the Honours of this World any ſtrong Enticement; Temptations will be more harmleſs, as having loſt their Strength; and Afflictions leſs grievous, as having loſt their Sting; and every Mercy will be better known, and reliſhed. It is now, under God, in thy own Choice, whether thou wilt live this bleſſed Life or not; and whether all this Pains I have taken for thee ſhall proſper, or be loſt. If it be loſt thro' thy Lazineſs, thou thyſelf wilt prove the greateſt Loſer. O *Man!* What haſt thou to mind but God and Heaven? Art thou not almoſt out of this World already? Doſt thou not look every Day, when one Diſeaſe or other will let-out thy Soul? Does not *the Grave wait to be thine Houſe*; and Worms to feed upon thy Face and Heart? What if thy Pulſe muſt beat a few Strokes more? What if thou haſt a little longer to breathe, before thou breathe out thy laſt; a few more Nights to ſleep, before thou ſleepeſt in the Duſt? Alas! what will this be,

when it is gone? And is it not almoſt gone already? Very ſhortly thou wilt ſee thy Glaſs run out, and ſay to thyſelf, "My Life is done! My "Time is gone! 'Tis paſt recalling! There's "nothing now but Heaven or Hell before "me!" Where then ſhould thy Heart be now, but in Heaven? Didſt thou know what a dreadful Thing it is, to have a Doubt of Heaven when a Man is dying, it would rouſe thee up. And what elſe but doubt can that Man then do, that never ſeriouſly thought of Heaven before?

§ 29. SOME there be that ſay, "It is not "worth ſo much Time and Trouble, to think "of the Greatneſs of the Joys above; ſo that "we can make ſure they are ours, we know "they are great." But as theſe Men obey not the Command of God, which requires them to have *their Converſation in Heaven*, and to *ſet their Affections on Things above*; ſo they wilfully make their own Lives miſerable by refuſing the Delights which God hath ſet before them. And if this were all, it were a ſmall Matter; but ſee what Abundance of other *Miſchiefs* follow the Neglect of theſe heavenly Delights. This Neglect——*will damp, if not deſtroy, their Love to God*;——*will make it unpleaſant to them to think or ſpeak of God*, or *engage in his Service*;——*it tends to pervert their Judgments concerning the Ways and Ordinances of God*;——*it makes them ſenſual and voluptuous*;—*it leaves them under the Power of every Affliction and Temptation, and is a Preparative to total Apoſtacy*;

ſtacy;——*it will alſo make them fearful and unwilling to die.* For who would go to a God, or a Place he hath no Delight in? Who would leave his Pleaſure here, if he had not better to go to? Had I only propoſed a Courſe of Melancholy and Fear, and Sorrow, you might reaſonably have objected. But you muſt have heavenly Delights, or none that are laſting. God is willing you ſhould daily walk with Him, and fetch in Conſolations from the everlaſting Fountain; if you are unwilling, even bear the Loſs; and when you are dying, ſeek for Comfort where you can get it, and ſee whether fleſhly Delights will remain with you; then Conſcience will remember, in Spight of you, that you was once perſuaded to a Way for more excellent Pleaſures; Pleaſures that would have followed you thro' Death, and have laſted to Eternity.

§ 30. As for you, whoſe Hearts God hath weaned from all Things here below, I hope you will value this heavenly Life, and take one Walk every Day in the *new Jeruſalem.* God is your Love, and your Deſire; you would fain be more acquainted with your Saviour; and I know it is your Grief, that your Hearts are not nearer to Him, and that they do not more feelingly love Him, and delight in Him. O try this Life of Meditation on your heavenly Reſt! Here is the *Mount*, on which the fluctuating *Ark* of your Souls may reſt. Let the World ſee by your heavenly Lives, that Religion is ſomething more than Opinions and Diſputes, or a Task of

outward Duties. If ever a *Chriſtian* is like himſelf, and anſwerable to his Principles and Profeſſion, it is when he is moſt ſerious and lively in this Duty. As *Moſes*, before he died, went up unto Mount *Nebo*, to take a Survey of the Land of *Canaan*; ſo the Chriſtian aſcends this Mount of Contemplation, and by Faith ſurveys his Reſt. He looks upon the glorious Manſions, and ſays, "*Glorious Things are* deſervedly *ſpoken of thee*, "*thou City of God!*" He hears, as it were, the Melody of the heavenly Choir, and ſays, "*Hap-*"*py is the People that is in ſuch a Caſe; yea,* "*happy is that People, whoſe God is the Lord!*" He looks upon the glorified Inhabitants, and ſays, "*Happy art thou, O Iſrael; who is like un-*"*to thee, O People ſaved by the Lord, the Shield* "*of thy Help, and who is the Sword of thine Ex-*"*cellency!*" When he looks upon the Lord Himſelf, who is their Glory, he is ready, with the reſt, to *fall down and worſhip Him that liveth for ever and ever*, and *ſay*, "*Holy, holy, ho-*"*ly Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and* "*is to come! Thou art worthy, O Lord, to re-*"*ceive Glory, and Honour, and Power!*" When he looks on the glorified Saviour, he is ready to ſay, *Amen*, to that *new Song*, "*Bleſſing, and Honour,* "*and Glory, and Power, be unto Him that ſitteth* "*upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and* "*ever: For thou waſt ſlain, and haſt redeemed us* "*to God by thy Blood, out of every Kindred, and* "*Tongue, and People, and Nation; and haſt* "*made us unto our God Kings and Prieſts!*".

When

When he looks back on the Wilderneſs of this World, he bleſſes the believing, patient, deſpiſed Saints; he pities the ignorant, obſtinate, miſerable World; and for himſelf, he ſays, as *Peter*, "*It is good to be here*;" or as *Aſaph*, "*It is* "*good for me to draw near to God; for lo, they* "*that are far from thee, ſhall periſh.*" Thus, as *Daniel* in his Captivity daily opened his Window toward *Jeruſalem*, though far out of Sight, when he went to God in his Devotions; ſo may the believing Soul in this Captivity of the Fleſh, look towards *Jeruſalem which is above*: And as *Paul* was to the *Coloſſians*, ſo may the Believer be with the glorified Spirits, *tho' abſent in the Fleſh, yet with them in the Spirit, joying and beholding their* heavenly *Order*. And as the Lark ſweetly ſings, while ſhe ſoars on high, but is ſuddenly ſilenced when ſhe falls to the Earth; ſo is the Frame of the Soul moſt delightful and divine, while it keeps in the Views of God by Contemplation: Alas, we make there too ſhort a Stay, fall down again, and lay by our Muſick!

§ 31. But, "O Thou, the merciful Father "of Spirits, the Attractive of Love, and Ocean "of Delights, draw up theſe droſſy Hearts unto "thyſelf, and keep them there till they are ſpi-"ritualized and refined; and ſecond thy Ser-"vant's weak Endeavours, and perſuade thoſe "that read theſe Lines to the Practice of this "delightful, heavenly Work! O ſuffer not the "Soul of thy moſt unworthy Servant to be a "Stranger to thoſe Joys, which he deſcribes to

" others; but keep me, while I remain on
" Earth, in daily Breathings after thee, and in
" a believing affectionate Walking with thee!
" And when thou comeſt, let me be found ſo
" doing; not ſerving my Fleſh, nor aſleep with
" my Lamp unfurniſhed; but waiting and long-
" ing for my Lord's Return! Let thoſe who
" ſhall read theſe heavenly Directions, not
" merely read the Fruit of my Studies; but the
" Breathings of my active Hope and Love: That
" if my Heart were open to their View, they
" might then read the ſame moſt deeply engra-
" ven with a Beam from the Face of the Son of
" God; and not find *Vanity*, or *Luſt*, or *Pride*
" within, when the *Words of Life* appear with-
" out; that ſo theſe Lines may not witneſs
" againſt me; but proceeding from the Heart
" of the *Writer*, may be effectual, through thy
" Grace, upon the Heart of the *Reader*, and ſo
" be the Savour of Life to both! *Amen.*"

Glory be to God in the higheſt; on Earth
Peace; Good Will towards Men.



FINIS.

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